

Universal
LOVE and GOODNESS
Shewed to be the
GREAT DUTY,
O F
All P E O P L E.

Written for the Use of the Parishioners of
Meldreth, near Royston in Cambridgeshire,

By RICHARD WILLOWES, *M. A.*
Late Vicar of *Meldreth.*

John vii. 24. *Judge not according to the Appearance,
but judge righteous Judgment.*

Gen. i. 27. *God created Man in his own Image, in
the Image of God created he him; Male and Female
created he them.*

*Man, in his Integrity, as he was at first made, was
loving and merciful, and had a gracious Mind and
Disposition in him: This was the Image of God, in
which he was created.*

L O N D O N :

Printed by G. Parker, in Salisbury-Court.

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To the Parishioners of Mel- dreth, in Cambridgeshire.

Loving Friends,



THE Enjoyment of this present Life, and even this Life itself, are not of so great and near Concern to us, as the Peace of God is; which will not long be continued to us, unless we fulfil his Mind and Will; or unless we are harmless, just, faithful, merciful and righteous, to all Persons, with whom we have to do, and to do unto them, as we would be done unto ourselves: This is his great Command, and it is the Duty, whereby we must continue and secure his Peace and good Will to us. God is gracious, and bestows Blessings and Mercies upon People for their Comfort and We'fare, and not for any private Benefit to himself: It is a great Excel-
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lency, and he is worthy of all Esteem and Reverence, and Imitation for it; it may give righteous Persons much Cause to hope, that he will be favourable and merciful to them; because they have the like Mind in them, as he has, and to do the like Work, as he does, and do live to the Peace and Welfare of others, and not to their own natural Desires. And on the other Side it may give selfish unrighteous Persons much cause to fear, that he is displeased with them, and will condemn them; because their Mind is contrary to his Mind, and their Work to his Work, and they live to their own Desires, and not to the Good of others: He is inclined from his own Nature and Goodness to be favourable to good People, and to dislike and cast away selfish bad People. God gives us Understanding, Freedom, Strength, Health, and some Conveniences of Life, and we depend continually upon him for them; therefore it is fit and necessary that we should submit unto him, and be ruled by him, and do as he will, and not as we will ourselves; he does not give to each of us an equal Part of the Blessings, which he bestows amongst us; but he gives to each of us one and the same Command, viz. To do to others, as we would be done unto; we are all equally bound to do so. He does not judge of Men by the outward

Enjoyments

Enjoyments and Privileges, which he gives them, but by their Care of that Duty ; Masters have greater Possessions than Labourers have, but he does not think the better of them for it ; I am a Minister and a Preacher, and do or should know more of the Doctrine and Duty of the Gospel, than a common Man does ; but if the Man has more Mind and Care for the Duty than I have, God has more Esteem and Favour for him, than he has for me

Some Men seem to know no other God, but the Law under which they live, or no other Will of God, as to what is to be done, or is not to be done, but what the Law commands or forbids ; they seem to think, that anything is just and right if they can defend it by Law, or if they are safe from the Law in it, and are let alone and not troubled for it : But that Law is an imperfect Rule of Duty ; it is a Part, but not the whole Will of God ; it much forbids Hurt and Mischief but it does not much command Mercy and Goodness ; it may keep a Man from being an injurious wicked bad Man, but it will allow him to be not a good Man, who may hope to be saved : God bids me to do to others as I would be done unto ; the Law restrains the Duty to Innocency and Justice : If I am harmless, and do no Injustice or Wrong

to another, tho' I do not do the Good which I might and shou'd do, the Law has no Fault to charge upon me, and to punish me for it. God bids me to be merciful, to deny myself, to spare from my own Desires, and to be helpful to the Poor; the Law confines the Duty to the Poor that cannot subsist, or that are in great Want, and are almost forced to ask help, or an order from the Justice for Relief: It does not bid me to be helpful to other poor People; it gives me Leave to save and keep to myself all that I can, excepting what the Overseer demands, or the Justice would order me to pay. God bids me to give to him that asketh of me, and from him that would borrow of me not to turn away, Matth. v. 42. He bids me to do good and to lend, hoping for nothing again, Luke vi. 35. The Law says no such Thing. God bids me to bear and forgive Injuries done unto me, and says Vengeance belongs to him, he will repay Rom. xii. 19. Heb. x. 30. The Law would persuade me to sue for Recompence, and to right myself. God bids me to be patient and peaceable against provoking Offences; the Law would have me to require Satisfaction, or to make the Offender to suffer. God bids me, where Need is, to remit Debts owing to me, and to let them go,

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and lose them, for Mercy and Pity Sake ; the Law allows me to demand and have them. I may be a just Man in the Sense of the Law, because I do not do the wrong and evil Thing which that forbids ; and yet God may think me to be an unjust Man, a worker of Iniquity, and an Evil-doer, because I do not do the right and good Thing that he commands.

I cannot give any Rule or Measure for doing to others, as we would be done unto ; I cannot prescribe any to myself ; that which may be some Discharge of the Duty at one time, or from one Person, may scarcely be so at another time, or from another Person. Discretion shews and teaches us what is profitable or fit, in common Things that we have to do ; and it may shew and teach us what is right and true in the Duty, when an Opportunity for it is offered to us ; but the Discharge of it, for the most Part, will be more or less true and faithful, as the belief of the Duty is more or less hearty and sensible in us. I have endeavoured to shew from many Things, that the Duty is necessary and good, and well pleasing in the Sight of God, above all other Duty ; that the Belief of it might be enlivened and strengthened in us above our selfish and natural Desires, and that it
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might become still more powerful and effectual, to the making us the good and righteous People, which our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ came to perswade us to be. I wish that this Treatise, as mean and imperfect as it is, could be distributed amongst you, and that it might be looked into, and the Subjects of it diligently considered; for then probably, by the Grace of God, it would have something of that good Effect upon us; and there would be the more hope, that God will be gracious and merciful to us. And that he may be so, is the hearty Prayer of,

Loving Friends,

Meldreth,

Your Minister

Sept. 4, 1735.

and Servant,



Richard Willowes.



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CHAP. I.

Love is the necessary Duty.



IT is the great duty of people to have an unfeigned Love, an hearty and effectual Good Will to others; and to do to them as they would be done unto themselves: This Duty is very necessary; for there is not any Thing which they do or can do, that will please God without it.

If a man is innocent, evil, just, kind and beneficial to his special Friends, and to his near and natural Relations. If he is sober, grave and stayed, and restrains the evil Passions, the sensual Desires, the vain Fancies of his natural Heart; and uses the Provisions for Life sparingly with Moderation and Self-denial. If he is diligent and industrious in his Business, and gives himself no more Cessation from it, than is needful to uphold his Health

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and Strength; if he bears his Afflictions and Troubles patiently with Submission to God, and thinks them to be a Punishment less than he deserves, and hopes that they will be ordered for his spiritual or future Good. If he believes in Christ, and trusts wholly in his Redemption and Merits, and has some hope in the Mercy of God upon it. If he is constant and devout in the Service and Worship of God, in all the Duties and Ordinances of Religion, both publick and private. If he has God and Christ much in his Thoughts, and meditates often upon his Justice and Holiness, or his manifold Works of Grace and Power, or upon the Humiliation, the Passion, the Exaltation, the Intercession of Christ, and does often perceive a sensible Comfort to arise from such Meditations, and from his Communion with God or Christ in his Ordinances, and has some kind Affection, some love to him in his Heart. If he should profess and persist in some false Way of Worship, which the Authority under which he lives forbids, until he is made to suffer for it in his Goods or Liberty; or, in the Words of the Apostle, 1 Cor. xiii. 3. Though he should give his Body to be burned for it, and should bear the Punishment, with Hope that he suffers it in Duty, for God and Christ's Sake. If a Man be such an one as is aforesaid, and has these Virtues or Dispositions and does those Things, any, or all of them, in a Degree above what is very common; and if he has not also an unfeigned Love, and effectual Good Will to others, an Heart and Temper, a Mind and Conscience for Justice Truth and Righteousness, for Equity and Humanity, for Mercy and Goodness, and to do to others as he would be done unto; then it may be feared that God at last will not accept and reward that Man as a just and righteous Man, as a good and faithful Servant, as a Believer in Christ: It may be feared that the want of that Duty, and of an Heart and Conscience for it, will do more to displease God; than all his other Duties will do to procure the Mercy and good Esteem of God towards him.

The Reason of this Fear or Doubt, we have in such Scriptures as these.



Math. v. 40. I say unto you, that except

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cept your Righteousness shall exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Matth. vii. 21. Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven. Matth. iii. 10. The Ax is laid unto the Root of the Trees; therefore every Tree that bringeth not forth good Fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the Fire. Rom i. 18 The Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all Ungodliness, and Unrighteousness of Men, who hold the Truth in Unrighteousness. 1 John iii. 14. 15. We know we have passed from Death unto Life, because we love the Brethren: He that loveth not his Brother abideth in Death, he is a Murderer, and ye know that no Murderer bath Eternal Life abiding in him.

The inward Disposition and Temper much inclines people to such Doings as are agreeing with it. If the Mind and Heart be sensual, it inclines them to Feasting to delicious Eating and Drinking, to luxurious Living: If it be Covetousness, it inclines them to deal hardly with others, to get and save what they can from them, by Unrighteousness and Iniquity, if not now and then even by injustice: If it be malicious, it inclines them to take Revenge, and to render Evil for Evil: If it be confident and proud, it inclines them to be obstinate, to withstand and oppose, or to be masterly, to insult, to over-rule, to have their Will upon others, to be unconcerned at what they bear or suffer. That Disposition and Temper perverts their right Understanding, and persuades them to think such doings to be innocent and lawful, or fit and reasonable, and hardens them against Reproof and Instruction. So likewise if the Mind and Heart be righteous, loving, merciful and good, it inclines People to do that which is just and right to others, to show Love and Mercy, to relieve and help them, to bear patiently with them, to forgive them, to deny themselves to benefit them, to be more free, effectual and constant in such good Duty than others are willing or do think it needful to be; because it is suitable and pleasing to the Sense and Temper of their Mind and Heart.

This the Gospel seems to teach. Christ compares People to Trees, and intimates, that they will have their Doings as much as they can according to their own Heart; like as Trees bring forth Fruit of the same Nature or Quality with them. Mat. vii, 17, &c. Every good Tree bringeth forth good Fruit; but a corrupt Tree bringeth forth evil Fruit. A good Tree cannot bring forth evil Fruit, neither can a corrupt Tree bring forth good Fruit. Every Tree that bringeth not forth good Fruit, is hewn down and cast into the Fire. He calls the Temper of the Heart the Treasure of it, and says. Luke vi. 45. A good Man out of the good Treasure of his Heart bringeth forth that which is good, and an evil Man out of the evil Treasure of his Heart bringeth forth that which is evil, for, out of the abundance of the Heart his Mouth speaketh. Perhaps it is that Temper, that he intends by the Eye. Matth. vi. 22. The Light of the Body is the Eye; if therefore thine Eye be single, thy whole Body shall be full of Light; but if thine Eye be evil, thy whole Body shall be full of Darknes. He put the Question. Matth. xii. 34. How can ye being evil speak good Things. It is said, 1 Cor. ii. 14. The natural Man receiveth not the Thing of the Spirit of God; for they are Foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they are Spiritually discerned. It is said, Rom. viii. 5. They that are after the Flesh do mind the Things of the Flesh (or that make for their present Satisfaction) but they that are after the Spirit (do mind) the Things of the Spirit (or that make for the Works of Righteousness, and are for the Good of others) Verily the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the Law of God neither indeed can be. 1 is said, 1 John iii. 9. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, he cannot sin because he is born of God. Or his renewed Sense and Mind will not suffer him to be wanting in any Duty that he ought to do.

First then let us believe and consider it, that the Truths which Christ has taught, his Works, his Example, the Doctrines and all Things in the Gospel, are intended to make us righteous, loving and merciful, and to do to others as we would be done unto; and that we shall be looked upon to believe them only so far as we are perswaded to be so.

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And therefore secondly let us, in our reading and hearing the Gospel, observe and take Notice of the Commands, Exhortations, and other Motives to the Duty: and also of the Condemnation that will follow Iniquity and Unrighteousness. We have need to remember them, and to think seriously and often of them.

Thirdly, let us in our Worship and Prayers to God make it our great Request, that he would give us some Understanding of ourselves, and of our Defects in the Duty, and a Belief of the Necessity and acceptableness of it before and above all other Duty. A Mind disposed for the Duty, as it is the one Thing needful, so it is the Gift of God and the Work of his Spirit, and it must be earnestly desired and sought, that it may be obtained.

Fourthly, let us be constant in the Duty, and be careful that we do not omit it, or be defective in it for present selfish Desires and Purposes. *Heb. x. 38. If a Man draw back, my Soul shall have no Pleasure in him.*

Fifthly, let us not always think it to be sufficient and enough, that we do as much in the Duty, as some Men do. We must observe and obey the Word of God, and do to others as we would be done unto ourselves as he commands, whether Men do so or not. He sees and takes Notice with what Freedom and Heart we do the Duty, what Means we have for it, what excuses, what reserve we make to our selves, what we intend or desire by it: And he is not pleased with us, when we have as much Care to favour our selves, and to have our own Mind as we have to fulfill his Mind, and to do as he bids.

CHAP. II.

LOVE is Useful and Good.

IF it might please God to give People a righteous Mind, a sensible Belief, that Love and Goodness, the doing to others as they would be done unto; is their great and necessary Duty above all Things else.

First,

First, it will make them good People indeed, the faithful Servants of God, the true Believers in Christ, it will incline and persuade them to do no Hurt, to give no Offence, to owe no Man any Thing, to pay and render to every one that which is his Due by Law or by Equity, to forgive Wrongs and Debts that may be bourn. To be submissive and obedient to their Governors, to be gentle and easy to those under them, to be friendly and helpful to their Neighbours and to Strangers; to spare what they can to relieve the Poor and Needy, to be moderate, to be patient and industrious, that they may have to pay and to give, as Duty requires; to be more careful of the Peace and Welfare of others, than they are of their own Gain and Satisfaction, to pray to God to forgive their Defects and Faults in righteous Duty, and to strengthen and dispose them for it; It will give them to perceive that an humble reverent Devotion is more before him, then his Worship is, and that that Duty is more before him, than that Devotion is. It will not allow them to be ungodly, excessive, luxurious, covetous, malicious, high-minded, &c. It will give them to know assuredly that it is contrary to Duty and offensive to God to be so: If they should not do the thing that is right and good, and should be safe from the Reproach and trouble of Men; yet they shall not retain their Innocency and Integrity, and keep in Peace with God. It will be a better Direction and Motive to righteous Duty to Man and to God, than perhaps any is, which they may read in Books, or which their most knowing and best Teachers can give them. They who have it in them cannot be bad People, they cannot with Content in themselves be willingly wanting in the Duty, they cannot be not good People.

Secondly this Sense and Mind will help People to read the Gospel with Profit; to observe and consider the more seriously, the Commands, Exhortations, Examples, &c. which are given for the Duty; to perceive that the Gospel is full of them, and is continually persuading to the Duty in one Instance of it or another; that great Things are spoken about it; Life is promised upon it, Death is threatned for the want of it: Whereby their Belief

Belief and Sense of it will be increased and strengthened in them. It will teach them to put a true or a false Interpretation upon some Terms and Places, which some Men do not understand, or do over-look, or perhaps do make the Matter or Proof of an erroneous or useless Opinion. It will settle and satisfy them, that they will not easily be removed from one Sect or Party of Religion to another. Like Children, *Eph. iv. 14. Tossed to and fro, and carried about with every Wind of Doctrine, by the sleight of Men, and cunning Craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive.* They will not believe every Spirit. *1. John iv. 1.* They will not easily take all that their Teachers may say for certain truth: Though they be reputed to be holy Men, and though they quote Scripture, and seem to be sweet and spiritual in expounding it, knowing assuredly, that Christ, or the Love and Goodness to others, that he has taught, is the Way and the Truth and the Life; and that no Man cometh unto the Father but by him, and by that Love and Goodness. *John xiv. 6.*

Thirdly, this Sense and Mind will help to keep People from the Fears of some superstitious Persons, who have hard Thoughts of God, and but little Concern for others; who think that he regards no-body, and cares for nothing but his own Will; that since he is supreme and Almighty, and has made and keeps People, he will have Submission and Worship from them, or punish or destroy them if it be not done and paid unto him; that he insists more upon it than he does upon duty to others that he is jealous of it, and will not give his Glory to another; that he will not have the Commands of Men to be added to his Commands, and Men to be obeyed and served with him; that it is an hard Thing to please him and keep in his Favour; that if he be offended he will make People to know it, he will hardly be pacified and brought to spare and pardon them.

A righteous Mind will perswade People, that those Thoughts of God are false, that he is no such one, as those superstitious Persons suspect him to be; that he commands the Ordinances of Religion to be observed and used; because they are Means of Grace and Helps

to make People good People, and not only because they are a Duty and Service to be done unto him; that it is Justice, Equity, Love, and good Duty to others, and not his own Worship, and the outward Way of it, that he is jealous of and concern'd for; that he accepts and loves them who are faithful and hearty in it, and accounts himself as served and honoured by them; and rejects and is displeased with them who are not so, and accounts himself as disobeyed and dishonour'd, and as it were blasphemed by them; that it is very hard, it is even impossible to reconcile him towards such as transgress that Duty, or are wilfully wanting in it, whilst they continue to do so.

Fourthly, this Sense and Mind will help to keep People from the false Hope and Presumption of some formal Persons, who are perswaded in themselves that God has a Kindness for them; because they are much in his Service and do mind that which is good, and are devout and constant in holy Duties, and do worship him as near as they can according to his own Appointment, and do confess and own it before him, that they have nothing in themselves, properly but Sin and Iniquity; and do trust wholly upon the Merit of his Son, and do give him the whole Glory of the Salvation which they hope for, and do often remember him, and think much upon him, and have a loving Heart towards him. But notwithstanding have but little more than a necessary Justice, and but little Heart for Mercy and Goodness, to do to others as they would be done unto.

A righteous Man will perswade People that such Holiness is no more than a Form of Godliness without the Power of it, and will deceive them who rest upon it; that God has not the Kindness for such Persons, as they think and hope he has; that he is loving and good in himself, and loves and favours them who are so; but not others who are not so, however devoted to him they are.

Fifthly, this Sense and Mind will help to keep People from being amused and perplexed with intricate Doctrines, which some confident Men do sometimes busie themselves, and trouble others with: As for Instance, whether God elects his People in and from himself, or
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Chap. 2. LOVE is Usefull and Good. 9

with a Respect to Duty in them? Whether Christ died for all Men, or for none but the Elected, or those for whom he prayed? Whether the Holy Ghost works in People by Force and Compulsion, or by Motive and Perswasion? Whether there be any Free Will, or any Disposition to Goodness in the Natural Man? Whether Sanctification goes before or accompanies, or follows after Justification? Whether Grace and Faith can be wholly lost from him that once hath it? Whether the trusting upon Christ with an inward strong Perswasion of being redeemed by him, is not the saving justifying Faith, to which the Promises of the Gospel are made and do belong? Whether righteous good Duties done to others, are not some of the Works and Deeds of the Law, by which no Man shall be justified or accepted with God? Whether the Sins, which a good Man shall have done, will be particularly remembred to him and mentioned to him at the last Judgment? Whether a Believer shall not sit with Christ upon the Judgment Seat at the last Day and give Sentence with him upon his unbelieving Neighbours? Whether an holy Man would not partake of their Wickedness, and be defiled with it, if he should worship God, where the Wicked are present and in Company? Whether it be not a daring boldness for such sinful abominable Creatures, as we are in ourselves, to say the Lord's Prayer, and to call the Holy God our Father? Whether God sees any Sin in his Saints, or any thing but his Son's Righteousness in Believers? Whether they are still under the Law and not set at Liberty from the Care and Trouble of the actual good Duties of it.

A righteous Mind will perswade People, that altho' such doctrinal Matters are devised and intended, or are sometimes taught to debase and humble Man, and to exalt God; yet that they do it in such Things, or in such a Manner, as God cares very little for: That some of those Questions are false in the Affirmative, and some of them are false in the Negative, and some of them are ambiguous and doubtful, and may be true, and may be false, both on the one Side and on the other, according as they may be explained: That they are apt and tend more to hinder, than to further Duty to others, and to abate

more than to excite the Care of it : That if People believe them, they may perhaps suggest some pleasing hopeful Thoughts at present, but they will surely fail and deceive them at last, if they trust much to them, and expect to find Favour with God for the Profession of them.

This Sense and Mind will render People acceptable and pleasing to God, and will gain them his Approbation and good Esteem. For God being loving and good in himself, it cannot be, but he must be somewhat pleased with them who are so ; God cannot dislike them who bear his own Image upon them, and have his Mind and Temper in them. Christ told his Disciples, *John xvi. 27. The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.* They loved him for the Goodness and Mercy that he shewed to others, and did think that it was very pleasing unto the Father ; and the Father loved them, because they had in them a Love and Mind for such Goodness.

And if God has a Respect and Favour for People, it may be hoped that he will bless and succeed their Labours, and provide sufficiently for them ; that he will keep off from them destroying Judgments and grievous Calamities, and will uphold them under the lighter Afflictions and Troubles that befall them ; that he will keep them from Sin and Iniquity, or from a continued Course in it ; that he will accept their Duties and Services, and hear their Prayers, and grant them their reasonable and righteous Requests ; that he will give them his Grace, and will improve and increase a righteous kind and loving, a gracious and God-like Heart and Mind in them ; that he will give them much Content and Comfort from it at present, and at length will receive them unto himself, and make them Inheritors of his Kingdom ; that he will not think any thing to be too great or good, to bestow in some measure upon them. Other Duties how carefully soever they are done will not so certainly and so effectually please God, and obtain his Grace and Blessing, as Love and Goodness to others will. It is then very useful and good that People have a Sense of it in them, a righteous Mind and Heart free and disposed for it.

Every

Chap. 2. *LOVE is Usefull and Good.*

II

Every Man may say, he knows very well that the Duty is good in it self and acceptable, but every Man has not the Sense of it in him: The Knowledge of it and the Sense of it, are different. Knowledge may be said to be the simple Apprehension or Conception of the Mind, without an inward Concern or Affection Sense may be said to be an inward Concern or Affection which arises from the Apprehension and Thought, of the Mind about it. Either of these two may be without the other. Some Men may know much Command and Instruction for it, and may be able to shew by Doctrines and undeniable Reasons, that it is highly necessary and good; who yet may have but a weak Sense of it in them, and but a cold Affection for it, and but little Disposition to it. And on the other Side, some ignorant People, some Children, some Heathens, what know not a Word of what the Scripture teaches about it, may have a strong prevalent Sense of it in them, a Mind and Heart, which does much incline them to it, and does rejoice and delight them, when they do it, and shew themselves kind and loving, helpful and good to others. The Knowledge of it may be got by reading, hearing, Conference, Study, and the like natural Means. The Sense of it must be got by the right and due Use of the Means of Grace. It is more the Gift of God, than of Nature or of Man. Knowledge alone cannot produce it; it cannot alter the Temper of the Heart, and make sensual, covetous, malicious or proud People, to become self denying, moderate, just, or equitable, gentle, merciful, or righteous minded: If they know they ought to be so, yet the evil Temper of their Heart overpowers their Knowledge, and prevails with them, to omit the Duty or to act against it to do Iniquity or to Sin. However there is no Doubt but Knowledge is profitable and good. God thought it to be so when he sent *Moses* and the Prophets, *Christ* and the Apostles, to teach it to People; and when he ordered the Scriptures to be written for our Learning. *Rom. xv. 4.*

It is probable, that the Holy Ghost works by and upon the Knowledge, revealed or natural, which a Man has of the Duty; and improves it, and makes a

more plain, and certain, and convincing to his Judgment; and presses it, and continues to press it upon his Heart, until the Man perceives, and as it were feels in himself, that the Duty is good and necessary; and until the perception and impression stays and abides in him; and becomes an effectual Sense and Disposition, a Temper strong and prevalent above his natural Desires and Inclinations; or until his Heart is as it were changed, and he is renewed, and made a righteous and good Man, free, hearty, and faithful in the Duty.

C H A P. III.

Love and Goodness to Others, is the Great Duty.

MANY Things (some of them great and high) may be mentioned as Helps to shew, that it is the great Duty of People to have an unfeigned Love, an hearty and effectual Good Will to others, and to do unto them as they would be done unto themselves. But who will receive this for Truth? Who will believe this to be their great Duty?

First, Not they, who from the Letter of the Commandment, and from their selfish Heart are perswaded, that a bare legal Innocency is all that is required of them in Duty to others (except to some special Friends) and that if they do no great actual Hurt to others, it may be sufficient to keep them in Peace with God; though they do but little of the Good which they are fitted and enabled to do.

Secondly, Not they, who give themselves up to present Satisfaction, to fulfil their Desires, and to work their Designs; and do presume upon the Goodness of God to them, and think that he allows them to do so and gives them Means, as it were for the Purpose, to employ and use to their own Mind, and as they will themselves.

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Chap. 3. LOVE is the Great Duty. 13

Thirdly, Not they, who have been taught, that the Duty is a Duty of the Law and not of the Gospel; and by the Deeds and Works of the Law no Man shall be justified in the Sight of God. *Rom. iii. 20.* and *Gal. ii. 16.* That if a Man expects to be justified, or to find Acceptance and Favour with God by it, he is fallen from Grace, and Christ shall profit him nothing *Gal. v. 2, 4.*

Fourthly, Not they, who think that their Work is not with Man but with God; that it lies not in the outward Duties, which common natural People, and which even Heathens, do or may do to one another; but in keeping the Commands and Ordinances of God, in serving and worshiping him humbly and devoutly, in improving themselves in Fear and Reverence of him, in Hope, in Love to him, in Delight in Communion with him, in obtaining a greater Holiness than is common; which may in some degree prepare and fit them for a blessed Enjoyment of him in the next Life.

Fifthly, Not they, who have heard and learnt, that the Duty has Merit and Popery in it; that it puts the Work of Man to the Work of Christ and of God; and implies and supposes, that the Satisfaction and Redemption which Christ has made is not perfect and sufficient of itself; and that the Grace and Mercy, which God offers to People through Christ, is not perfectly gracious, and pure and free Mercy, as it ought to be believed and confessed, and as the Gospel declares it to be.

People who have such Thoughts and Perswasions as these in them, will not, and perhaps cannot heartily believe and acknowledge, that Love and Goodness to others is their great Duty.

But they, who by the Grace of God have been restrained from evil selfish and unrighteous Ways and doings, whose Heart is not corrupted by them, and enslaved to them, whose right Mind is not perverted and prejudiced against the Truth, who have some Justice and Equity, some Love to human Goodness, some Desire to please God, and to work out their Salvation in them; they may perceive, and believe and know, that an hearty Love and Goodness to others, is the great and necessary Duty.

And

And it may help to strengthen the Belief and Knowledge of this Truth in them; it may be some Motive and Encouragement to them, to shew Love and Goodness as they can; it may give them some Comfort and Hope in God upon it; to consider seriously, and to apply to themselves these Things here following.

Love and Goodness to Others.

1. It is the great Law and Property of the Kingdom of God and Christ.
2. It is the Disposition of the Nature of God; or it is the Temper of his Spirit and Mind.
3. It was the Disposition and Mind of the Lord Jesus Christ.
4. It is the Principal, if not the only Grace and Virtue, which the Holy Ghost works in those good People, whom he renews and sanctifies.
5. The Saying that a miraculous Work of it, was done by *Belzebub*, was Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost; the Sin that would not be forgiven.
6. It is the Mind and Temper of the holy Angels.
7. Malice, which is contrary to it, is the Mind and Temper of the evil Angels.
8. Pride, Confidence, Unrighteousness to others, was the Sin or Sins, by which the evil Angels fell.
9. It is the Joy and Happiness of the Saints above in Heaven, or it is a very great Part of it.
10. It was the Faith, that was imputed to *Abraham* for Righteousness.
11. It was required by the Law of *Moses*.
12. It was the Mind and Intent of the Prophets, and the Message with which they were sent.
13. Religious Unrighteousness, or an unrighteous Worship was the Hypocrisy of the Pharisees.
14. It is the Sense and Intent of the Commands of the Gospel.
15. It is the Use intended from the Doctrines of the Gospel.
16. It is the Use intended from the Ordinances of Religion.

17. It is the Work and Duty, that does indeed please God.

18. It is the Work and Duty, that does indeed glorify God.

19. It is the principal Part and Property of Righteousness.

20. It is the Work and Duty especially, by which we shall be judged at the last Day.

C H A P. IV.

Love and Goodness to Others, is the great Law and Property of the Kingdom of God and Christ.

I LOVE and Goodness to others is the Law of Heaven and Earth; it is the great and sovereign Law of the Kingdom of God; which may be said to be the Government, by which he rules over his reasonable Creatures, Men and Angels; or it may be said to be the Authority, which he exercises upon them; in giving them Laws and Commands, to direct them what to do, and what not to do; in rewarding the Obedient, and in punishing the Disobedient. He is supream, his Authority is absolute. If he could have been so minded, he might have commanded Things, which would have been more grievous, than good to them. But he is pleased to have his Goodness to accompany his Authority, and perhaps to have place before it, and to make Laws, which shall not only exact Obedience and Submission to him; but also shall be for the Benefit of People, for the Welfare, Peace and Happiness of the Society and of every Person of it. And there is not any Thing, that does so much secure and advance their Welfare, Peace and Happiness, as Love and Goodness. Therefore he has declared it to be his Mind and Will, the Duty, in which especially and before any other, he will be served and obeyed, and with which he shall be best pleased: He has given and enjoined it as his great Command;

Command ; he has made it the fundamental and principal Law of his Kingdom and Government.

The Kingdom of God is intended for righteous and good People, who have been helpful to the Poor, it will be said to them, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the Foundation of the World, for I was an hungred and ye gave me Meat, &c. Mat. xxv. 34.* It is their Father's good Pleasure to give it them. *Luke xii. 32.* They shall shine forth as the Sun in it. *Mat. xiii. 43.* It is said, *Mat. viii. 11.* Many (who have the Compassion and Goodness of the Heathen Gentleman in them) shall come from the East and West, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven. But the Children of the Kingdom (who have it not in them) shall be cast out into utter Darkness. A Scribe, confessed that to love God with all the Heart and to love his Neighbour as himself, was more than whole Burnt Offerings and Sacrifices. And Christ seemed to have had some Hope of him from it, and said, *Mark xii. 34.* Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God. It is said, *Rom. xiv. 17, 18.* The Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink, but Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these Things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of Men. The Ephesians were converted to it, and the Apostle declared their blessed Estate and said, *Eph. ii. 19.* Now therefore ye are no more Strangers and Foreigners, but Fellow Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God. The Colossians were converted to it, and he gave Thanks. *Col. i. 12, 13.* For that God had made them meet to be partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light. And had deliver'd them from the Power of Darkness and translated them into the Kingdom of his dear Son. Unrighteousness properly is the not doing the Duty, especially the good Duty to others which is commanded and ought to be done, or it is the being unfaithful and faulty in it. The Apostle speaks it as a certain Truth, which People could not be ignorant of, tho' perhaps some did not well consider it, *Cor. vi. 9.* Know ye not that the Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. Christ affirms it, *Mat. v. 20.* I say unto you, that except your Righteousness (your Love and Goodness

Goodness to others) shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Christ is the Governour, and has the management of the Kingdom in his Hand; he is full of Grace and Truth. *Job i. 14. He loves Righteousness, and hates Iniquity. Heb. i. 9. He will have the one observed and done, and the other forborn and not done; he will judge and reward and punish for it. The Angels are Subjects and under his Government. Hebr. i. 6. When he bringeth in the first begotten into the World, he saith; And let all the Angels of God worship him. 1 Pet. iii. 22 He is gone into Heaven, and is on the right Hand of God, Angels and Authorities and Powers being made subject to him. Phil. ii. 9. &c. God hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name which is above every Name, that at the name of Jesus every Knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in Earth, and things under the Earth; and that every Tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. The holy Angels are bid to worship him, and to bow the Knee to him. That is they are bid to be subject to him, to keep his Law, to fulfil his Commands, to be loveing and good amongst themselves and to his other reasonable Creatures, in Obedience and duty to him; as well as to honour him for his personal Dignity, for his being the only begotten, the eternal, the natural Son of the Father.*

It is said *Col. i. 16. By him were all Things created that are in Heaven and that are in Earth, &c. and by him all Things consist. Heb. i. 3 He upholds all Things by the Word of his Power* Which may seem as if it had been said. Not only the material Heaven and Earth and all Things in them, were made and framed by his almighty Power; but also the Societies, the Degrees and Orders of Angels above, and of Men below, were constituted and set up by his Wisdom and Goodness, and are continued and kept up in their Estate, and being by his Law and Spirit of Love. *Heb. xi. 3. Through Faith we understand, that the Worlds were framed by the Word of God; so that Things which are seen, were not made of Things which do appear. The Duties of Justice and Equity, of Parents Masters and Governours to their Inferiours, and of their Inferiours to them; were not the counsel and advice of Men only; but God commands them, he has put some Sense of them into People, he will have them done for the good of*
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others, for the peace and welfare of the Society. The Apostle prayed *Eph. iii. 18, 19. That the Ephesians might be able to comprehend what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth Knowledge; that they might be filled with all the fulness of God.* Which seems as if he had prayed, that they might believe, that the love and goodness, to which they were persuaded, was the love that was in Christ, and that the more free and hearty they were in it, the more of the fulness of God they had in them; that he abounds and exceeds all the Creatures in it, that it was extended throughout his Kingdom of Grace, higher and further, than their Thoughts could reach. It might be to their comfort to consider, that it related them to Heaven, and made them to be of kin to the Angels, to Christ and to God, and made them the obedient and proper Subjects of his Kingdom. The Law of Love and Goodness to others is founded in the Mind and Nature of God, and therefore the least Duty of it cannot be annulled and become of no Obligation; it cannot be wilfully neglected with safety. *Luke xvi. 17. It is easier for Heaven and Earth to pass, than one Tittle of that Law to fail.*

Some Duties may seem to be more different from Love and Goodness to others, than they really are. *Math. xxii 37. 38 Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind. This is the first and great Commandment.* The love of God is not a fond love, or a kind affection of Heart towards his Person, for the Blessing which we have, or hope to have from him. For this is more a selfish than a Godlike Love; it seems to be more Brutish, than Human and Righteous. *Isa. i. 3. The Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Master's Crib.* But the love of God is an high and worthy Esteem of him, for the Goodness and Mercy, which is in him, and which is natural to him; for his free and gracious Mind to relieve and help and bless and save, not ourselves only, but also all other good People; for his making Love and Mercy and Goodness his great Command and Law, wherein before and above any Thing else he will be obeyed and served; for the especial Favour, which he has for good People, and for his Purpose and Promise highly to reward them for the Good-will they do, and for the Trouble, which they bear and suffer for it, as if he was himself really benefited by it. The

The Esteem of God for his Goodness and Mercy is an Esteem of Goodness and Mercy it self, it is a Love for it; it is a Belief and Sense of the Excellency of it; it makes in People a Mind and Desire to do good as they can, in Obedience and Conformity to him; that they may please him, and that they may please themselves too, and may do and may become somewhat like unto him. He accepts their Duty and their Persons, and will grant them Mercy and Life. This Esteem of God for his Goodness and Mercy is the greatest Principle or Motive, that People can have to be merciful and good to others, and do to them as they would be done unto; it is the first and great Commandment.

John xvii. 3 This is Life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent To believe and know, with an inward Perception, that God (and Christ also) is gracious merciful and good, and is best pleased with Goodness done to others; and from that Belief and Perception to have an Heart and Mind for the Duty, is to have a saving Knowledge of him. Col. iii. 10 The new Man is renewed in Knowledge (or in the Sense of the Mind) after the Image of him that created him. The Jews had not this Knowledge of God in them. Math. xii. 7. If ye had known what this meaneth, I will have Mercy and not Sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. John. viii. 54, 55 Whom ye say, that he is your God, yet ye have not known him. John xvi 3 These Things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father nor Me.

Math. xvi. 24. If any Man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his Cross and follow me. He must do this for the good of others; for so Christ did it. Otherwise it may be no better accepted from him, than the fasting was accepted from the Pharisee who said, he fasted twice in the Week. Luke xviii. 12. But he did not say, and I think he could not say, that any Body was the better for it; and for that Reason probably it was that the Publican was justified rather than he was.

The Mendicant (or Begging) Monks and Friars amongst the Papists give themselves much to Prayer, and Reading or Meditation, and Fasting and Abstinence, and religious Service; and do with strict self-denial and much patience observe and keep the Orders appointed them.

In so doing they may be said to follow the Founders or Rulers of their Profession; but they cannot well be said to follow Christ; for he denied himself to do good to others, and bid them to do so: But they deny themselves and bear the hardship of their Profession, not that they may do good to others, but that they may receive good from others: For they live mostly by begging, or upon the Bounty of others: and by that Course of Life they are in a Manner useles and unprofitable; and may be said to be more a Charge and a Burden than a Benefit to others. Self-denial and takeing up the Cross does not make a Man to be a follower of Christ, unless he does it for the good of others, as Christ did it.

John iii. 16. God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life. John vi. 29 This is the Work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. To believe in Christ, is to believe, that the righteous Duty, the Love and Mercy and Goodnesse to others, which he taught and commanded, is the Will and Mind of God; and is the Work and Duty, that God is pleased with above all others: That Justification and Life is promised and will be graciously given to them who are faithful in it; that Condemnation and Death is threatned and will be justly executed upon them who are not so: It is to have this Belief hearty and effectual in us, so as to be wrought upon and perswaded by it, to be loving and merciful, to do that which is righteous and good to others; and thereupon to trust and hope in the gracious Goodness and Mercy of God, for Acceptance and Salvation through the Redemption and Merits of Christ, this it is to believe in Christ.

It is sometimes expressed in other Words, as by coming to him, by receiving him, by knowing him, by hearing his Words, by abiding in him and having his Words abiding in us, by takeing his Yoke upon us and learning of him, by knowing the Truth, by serving him, by keeping his Commandments, by coming unto the Father by him, by doing the will of God, &c. These are but other Words for believing in him, and do intend the Belief and Sense of the righteous and good Duty which he taught. *John viii. 51. Verily, verily, I say unto you; if a Man keep my Saying, he shall never see Death. John xv. 12.*

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This is my Commandment (or my Saying) that ye love one another as I have loved you. If a Man loves others heartily and effectually, he keeps the Saying of Christ; that is, he believes in him and shall not perish. For John v 29. They that have done good, shall come forth unto the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done evil, unto the Resurrection of Damnation

These great Duties, the Love of God, the Knowledge of God, self-denial and taking up the Cross, and believing in Christ, have Love and Goodness to others for the special Ingredient and Property in them; without which they are not that which the Gospel intends by them and has promised eternal Life unto: They do not disprove but rather help to shew, that it is the great Duty of the Gospel, the great Law and Property of the Kingdom of God and Christ. Therefore they who have an Heart and Mind for the Duty, are his People, and are the true Subjects of his Kingdom, and will have it given them. But they, who have not that Heart and Mind in them, have not the Nature of his People and Subjects in them and do not observe and obey the Law of his Kingdom, and will not be suffered to inherit it.

C H A P. V.

Love is the Disposition of the Nature of God, or it is the Temper of his Spirit or Mind

THE Temper in us may be said to be the settled Disposition of our Nature, Heart, mind, or Inward-man; whereby we perceive a Sense and Affection to be made in us, from certain Things; and we like or dislike them, and are pleased or displeased at them, as they do agree or do not agree with it. If our Temper does much incline us to Innocency and Justice, to Truth and Equity, to Righteousness, to Mercy and Goodness, then it makes us to be well affected towards Persons, that have those Vertues truly in them; it makes us to have a real and effectual Love for them, to be ready and willing to please or help them as we can, though we can have no
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Service or present Benefit from them: Because they have Truth and Righteousness in them; which is agreeing and pleasing to our Temper and Nature, as well as approved of by our Judgement and Reason; or because they have the same Heart and Mind in them as we have in us, and are our very selves, as it were, living and acting in other Bodics. And on the contrary it makes us to be disaffected towards selfish unjust and evil Persons, who have little Mind or Conscience for those good Duties; it makes us to be displeased or grieved at them and to shun their Company; and although they are harmless and even civil to us, yet to look upon them to be as great Enemies as almost any we have: The difference of their and our Nature and Temper is an irreconcilable Enmity, and does much avert and estrange us from them, and make us that we cannot have so much kindness for them, as we have for Strangers.

There is no good Man, who is truly so, but he is thus affected more or less, as the Sense of those Virtues is strong and lively in him: They have Place chiefly in the Heart, and are as much or more the Disposition of his Nature, and the Temper of his Mind and Inward-Man, as they are the Resolution of his Thoughts and Judgment, for some Persons are renewed and changed into them, and are free hearty and faithful in the Works and Duties of them, who yet have not Knowledge to reason and discourse much about them: And again. some others can discourse and reason learnedly and well about them, who yet have but little Mind and Disposition to them, or to the Workes and Duties of them. Holy David declares *Psal. 101.* How he was affected towards the faithful, and towards others. He says *Psal. xvi. 2.* *My Goodness extendeth not to thee O God! but to the Saints that are in the Earth, and to the excellent in whom is all my Delight.* *Psal. xxvi. 5.* *I have hated the Congregation of evil doers, and will not sit with the Wicked.* It is remembred of just Lot *2 Pet. ii. 7, 8.* *That he was vexed with the Conversation of the Wicked.* The Apostle commends Christian People for their Love to the Saints and Brethren; and thereby he reaches, that that Love is the Sense and Temper of a renewed gracious Heart. But to be without natural Affection, to be void of Humanity, to be destitute of love to Goodness and to good People, he seems to teach, that it

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is the Sign and Effect of a reprobate Mind Rom. i. 28 &c. As it is with good Men, so it is with God ; he is inclined from his own Mind and Nature to love Righteousness and to hate Iniquity ; to be pleased with merciful and good People, and to be displeased with unrighteous selfish bad People.

God is infinitely wise, powerful and great ; he is infinitely just and righteous, gracious, merciful and good : His righteous Properties, his Love and Mercy and Goodness to others, are diffused, as it were, through his Being, and are the Disposition of his Nature, the Temper of his Spirit, the Sense of his Mind, the Joy, the Vigour, the Life of his Heart, the great Ingredients or Parts of his Felicity and Happiness : He loves them dearly, he is well pleased with them in himself, and loves himself for them : He esteems and values them, above his Knowledge Power liberty, above his Dominion and Supremacy and his brightest Glory : He makes them his Business and his Delight : He designs them, and is directed by them in all that he does : He is continually employing his Wisdom and Power, his Spirit and Providence about them ; and rejoices to see that which is right and good, and is an Expression and Work of them to be effected and done. He imparted of them to his Creatures : He made the Angels with a Disposition to Goodness ; but some of them were not careful to be guided by it, to strengthen and increase it : He made Man of a righteous loving merciful Mind and Heart, and therein especially the Image of God, in which he was created did consist ; but Man was deceived and seduced to Sin and to provoke God to withdraw his grace from him ; yet it was the Mind, the Nature and Temper, which from himself at first he communicated to the Angels and to Man : He made the very brute Creatures, with some good Nature or Affection and Love ; and they shew it, to their young ones, and to their own Kind, or to their Company, and to their Keepers that feed them : He has put a Sense of righteousness in People ; they differ in their Heart and Practice, in their Ways and Manners, in their Opinions and Judgement, in their Doctrines and Professions ; but they all do consent and believe, that Justice, Equity, Truth, Love, and Mercy are great and necessary Duties : He will have the good Duty, which is to be done to others,

thers, to be done to them, before the Service and Worship, that is to be done more directly to himself: He has promised Blessing and Life to them, who are faithful in it: He has threatned Vengeance and Death to them, who do Iniquity, and not the Thing which is right and good, which they would have done unto themselves: He carries on the Works of Nature, and makes all Things serviceable to some good Use and Benefit of his Creatures: He makes daily Provision for the Wants, the Conveniences, the Delights and Pleasures of People: He does it freely and graciously, without their good desert, and against the bad desert of most of them, and seems to have some satisfaction and pleasure in their Welfare: When he sees it needful to punish, he does it for the most part gently, and lays no heavier Affliction upon them, than they can bear; and than is needful to restrain them from Sin and Vanity, and to weaken or mortifie unrighteous selfish Desires and Dispositions in them; some times he blesses them the more abundantly afterwards for their Suffering and Patience, and restores to them their former Peace, Prosperity, and Happiness with Addition and Increase: His Blessings are more in number, and greater in weight and substance, and longer in continuance, than his Afflictions are. All his Works are good, and are designed and ordered for the good of People; they shew that he is good in himself.

If Love and Goodness were not the Temper and Mind of God, then he would have no more Delight in it, than he has in any Thing else, or than he has even in that which is contrary to it: Then Things good, and Things evil, just and unjust, right and wrong, true and false; would be alike indifferent to him, and he would be little better pleased with the one than with the other; then it would be almost all one to him, what People are or what they do; as whither they do work righteousness, and are careful of that which is just and right and good to others, or do work Iniquity, and make it their Business to fulfil and satisfy their own Desires and Mind only; whither they are innocent and harmless, or are injurious and mischievous; whither they are faithful and true, or are dissembling and false; whither they are humble, meek, gentle and submissive, or are proud and haughty insulting and obstinate; whither they are tender-

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der-hearted and merciful, or are hard-hearted, cruel, malicious and revengeful : Then he might accept and take unto him the unrighteous and the wicked, and reject and put from him the righteous and the good, without regard to their Deserts, or to his own Word : For as he would not be much pleased with them, who keep his good Commands ; so he would not be much displeased with them who break them : Then he might lay heavy Commands upon People, grievous to be born, hard to be done and kept ; not to withhold them from Iniquity, nor to improve them in righteousness ; but to exact Service and Submission from them : Then he might increase Judgements and multiply Calamities upon them, and be deaf to their sorrowful Complaints and unmoved at their sufferings and Misery : Then he might have a double Mind, or two Wills, as it were, in him, a revealed Will and a Secret Will ; and might speak one Thing and mean another ; and might give Commands, which he would not have to be done ; and might make Promises and denounce Threats, with a reserved intent, not to fulfil and execute them, or not often to do it : Then he might do these Things to shew his Power and his Greatness ; to shew that he is God, Supream over all, Independent, above Law or Order ; one who will do what he will, by no other Rule and for no other Reason, but because he will.

It is false, wicked, and blasphemous, to think of God, that he is such a one, as can do such Things as these : And yet we should almost unavoidably make him to become such a one, if we could and should take away Love and Goodness to others from him ; for so we should bereave and deprive him of the only or principal Property, which restrains him from doing such Things, and which makes it to be displeasing to him, and repugnant to his Nature and Temper, and contrary to the Sense of his Heart and Mind, to be such a one

The natural Goodness and Righteousness of God is often spoken of in the Scriptures. *Exod. xxxiv 6, 7 He is the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, abundant in Goodness and Truth, keeping Mercy for thousands, forgiving Iniquity Transgression and Sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty, &c. Deut. xxxii. 4 He is the Rock, his Work is perfect ; for all his Ways are judgement, a God of Truth and*

without Iniquity, just and right is he. Psal. xi. 7. The righteous Lord loveth righteousness, his Countenance doth behold the upright. Psal. lxxxvi. 15. Thou O Lord art a God full of Compassion and gracious long suffering, and plenteous in Mercy and Truth Jer ix 24. He delights to exercise Loving-kindness, Judgment and Righteousness in the Earth. Math v. 45. He maketh his Sun to rise on the Evil and on the Good, and sendeth Rain on the Just, and on the Unjust. Luke vi. 35. He is kind to the unthankful and to the evil. Math. xix. 17. There is none good but one that is God. 2 Cor. i. 3. He is the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Comfort. 2 Cor. xii. 11. He is the God of Love and Peace. Heb vi 10. He is not unrighteous, to forget the Work and Labour of Love, which People shew towards his Name in ministering to the Saints. John i. 5. God is Light, and in him is no Darkness (no Malice) at all. 1 John iv 8. God is Love, and again, ver. 16. God is Love. The Scriptures do very often and very expressly and plainly speak of the natural Goodness of God; and do teach, as it is Psal. cxlv. 8, 9. That he is gracious and full of Compassion, slow to Anger and of great Mercy; that he is good to all, and his tender Mercies are over all his Works.

God has been patient and long suffering with People and Nations; and thereby shewed that he was desirous still to do them Good, and to continue to bless them. But injustice and unrighteousness increased and became strong and remediless in them; and it being destructive of the Peace and Good of others, and contrary to his Mind, it did sooner or later provoke him to punish or destroy them. It is said of Men of the old World. Gen. vi. 5, 6. That God saw that the wickedness of Man was great in the Earth, and that every Imagination of the Thoughts of his Heart was only evil continually, and it repented the Lord that he had made Man on the Earth, and it grieved him at his Heart, because ver. xi. The Earth was corrupt before God and filled with Violence, yet he bore with their Violence, their injustice and Iniquity to one another, many Years; before he brought the Flood over them and destroyed them. It is said of the Cities of Sodom and Gomorah Gen. xviii. 20. That their cry was great, and their Sin was very grievous. Yet he had been patient with them and had let them alone to go on, in their eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. (Luke xvii. 28)
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in their sensual and selfish doings, for a long time: Until there were not ten righteous good Men to be found amongst them, Gen. xviii. 32. Then at length he brought out just Lot from amongst them, and consumed them with Fire from Heaven, Gen. xix. 24, 25.

He pitied the poor People of Israel and was, as it were, grieved and concerned at the Bondage and Misery, which they were made to endure; and he did not presently, but after some Years send destroying Plagues upon the Egyptians for oppressing them, and holding them under Slavery and Hardship as they had done, against his Command and Threatning.

It seems to be taught in the xviii, xix, and xx. Chapters of *Leviticus*, that it was partly for unrighteous Doings to others, that God destroyed the Nations of Canaan. For he commanded his People *Levit. xviii. 3. After the doings of the Land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt shall ye not do; and after the doings of the Land of Canaan whither I bring you, shall ye not do.* And he commanded expressly and particularly. *Levit. xix. 9. &c. Thou shalt not gather the Gleanings of thy Harvest from the Poor and Stranger. Ye shall not steal, nor deal falsely nor lie one to another. Nor swear by my Name falsely: Thou shalt not defraud thy Neighbour nor rob him, nor withhold his Ways, nor curse the Deaf, nor put a Stumbling-block before the Blind, nor respect Persons in Judgment, nor go up and down as a Tale-bearer, nor hate thy Brother in thy Heart, nor avenge, nor bear any grudge against him, ver. 33. Te shall not vex the Stranger ver. 35. Te shall do no unrighteousness in Judgment, in Meet yard, in Weight, or in Measure. And *Levit. xx. 23. Te shall not walk in the Manners of the Nation, which I cast out before you; for they committed all these Things, and therefore I abhorred them.* It was not only for Incest and Lewdness, Sorcery and Witch craft, Idolatry, and the like gross Wickedness: But it was also partly for their unjust and unrighteous Doings to others, that he abhorred them and cut them off.*

Excepting the Jews, other People and Nations were Heathens and Idolaters; they did not worship him, they did not know him; they thought, as they were told, that they received the Enjoyments of Life from their false and feigned Gods; and accordingly they worshiped and served and sacrificed to them. But notwithstanding He it was, who is the true God of Heaven and Earth,

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the God of the *Gentiles* as well as of the *Jews*, whose Temper and Spirit is Love, and Mercy, and Goodness ; He it was, who took care of them, and provided for them and supplied their Needs and Desires ; who as it is said, *Acts* xiv. 17. *Did them good, and gave them Rain from Heaven and fruitful Seasons, and filled their Hearts with Food and Gladness.* He kept them in a sufficient Condition, and continued them a People, so long as Innocency and Justice, Truth and Faithfulness, Equity and human Love and Mercy, was kept up and continued amongst them : But when they degenerated in their Sense and Care of those necessary Duties, and sought their sensual Pleasures or worldly Profits, and their own Mind and Designs, by Ways, that were not right and good ; then at length he sent Calamities upon them, and weakened or wasted them, and in time destroyed them, or made them to become not the People and State which they formerly were

The *Jews* that were before the Captivity, were earnestly bent towards their own Designs and Desires, they had but little Mind for good and righteous Duty, they were hard-hearted and unconcerned at the Wants and Hardship and Miseries of the destitute and afflicted. The Prophets called upon them to forbear to afflict the Widow, the Fatherless, and the Stranger as they have done, and to compassionate and relieve and help them, as their Need required ; and told them, that God was very angry with them and would surely destroy them, if they did not do it ; but they believed it not till it came upon them. *2 Chron* xxxvi. 15, 16. *The Lord God of their Fathers sent to them by his Messengers, rising up betimes and sending, because he had Compassion on his People and on his dwelling Place : But they mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his Words and misused his Prophets, until the Wrath of the Lord arose against his People, till there was no Remedy*

The *Jews* that were after the Captivity, had the Law read to them, and did not go after other Gods as some before did, nor did they commit the Sins forbidden. But they had but little mind to be restrained from their own Desires, and to do good, and to help the Poor, further than was plainly commanded. Christ came to persuade them to it ; and they crucified him, and killed or persecuted his Apostles and People, for believing in him, or for professing the Duty to be more acceptable

to God, than legal Ordinances and Services done directly to him, were; and they did it for his Sake, with respect and concern for him, that his Law and Worship and Honour might not be slighted and neglected.

God was grievously offended with them, and destroyed them by most Calamities and Miseries: Their strong Towns were taken from them; they were slaughtered by many Thousands at a Time in many Places; their Country was utterly spoiled and wasted; when their great City was encompassed by their Enemies, they had Wars in it amongst themselves; many suffered by Thieves and Robbers, by private or seditious Murders; many thousands died and perished by extream Famine or Hunger. God brought that lamentable intire Destruction upon them, in about forty Years after they had crucified his Son, and had begun to persecute the Profession of the righteous and good Duty, which he had taught. They, who were then abroad and escaped the Destruction, and the following Generations of them, have not been able to recover their lost Country; nor to get Possession of any other Country, or to settle them selves together as a State or Nation in it; they have been divided and scattered up and down, some in one Place and some in another; they have been expelled and banished from the Country or City, as Vagabonds, as a kind of wild or strange People that scarce had the Heart and Nature of Men in them, and that were scarce fit to have Conversation and Society with civil People.

The Displeasure and Curse of God seems to have pursued and fallen upon the Succeeding Generations of the unbelieving Jews. And yet they have always had a strong Trust in him, and did confidently expect, that he would perform to them; or to their Children, the Promise made to their Father *Abraham*, and would bring them again into their own Country, and make them the Head people of the World.

But it is more likely, that as they have hitherto been, so they must still be even until the last Day, a living Example, and a standing Monument, as it were, of the Judgment and Vengeance of God against Iniquity and Unrighteousness done to others, and also of his rejection and abhorrence of a useless formal pharisaical Worship and Profession; that People, as they desire his Peace and

and Mercy, may take heed and be afraid, to be unrighteous to others, and wanting in the Duty, which they ought to do to them, when they may see and know the Offence and Danger of it from the *Jews*.

The Apostles taught Love and Mercy, and righteous Duty to others, as Christ had done before and commanded them to do it; and People did believe it to be their great Duty, and were faithful in it. But some did in a little Time, one Way or another decline from it: Some held that Faith without Works was sufficient; some thought that the Law of *Moses* must be kept and done; some observed a Distinction of Days and Meats; some made Divisions about their Teachers; some received the Lords Supper unworthily, that is uncharitably; some would right themselves by Law before they would bear and forgive; some had more mind to have their own Desires and Satisfaction, than they had to deny themselves, and to be helpful to others; some held that there would be no Resurrection of the Dead. These Things were beside or against the righteous Duty, that was taught, and commanded, and would hinder it; the more Concern Men had for them, the less Mind and Care they would have for the Duty; therefore the Apostles complained of them, and warned People against them.

If such Things did begin and arise then in their Time, it is likely that they did not abate, but increase afterwards: It was foretold that *Iniquity would abound, and the Love of many would wax cold*, Mat xxiv. 12. And 2 Tim iii. 1. &c. *That perilous Times would come, for Men would be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, &c. having a Form of godliness, but denying the Power thereof.* The *Jews* first opposed the Duty, and were destroyed for it: After that great Persecutions and Destructions were made upon the Christians by the Heathen. It is probable that God suffered them to be made; because much People were much fallen away from the Love and Mercy and Duty, which they ought to have shewn and done to others: Though they did still believe in Christ, and did expect to have Justification and Life with God, through his Merits and Suffering; and perhaps would have suffered and died Martyrs, before they would have renounced that Faith and Hope; yet probably they were

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not the righteous and good People to others, which they might and should have been.

When the Roman Emperors were become Christians, or of some Christian Profession, and Persecution ceased, and the Church was quiet from the Heathen; then Differences increased in it; some Men were earnest to teach and perswade their own Thoughts and Opinions about the God-head of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and about lower Matters; and other Men opposed and disproved them; and Synods met, but could not always end the Difference and settle the Doctrine; and certain Men were put down from their Places, if not banished out of the Country; because they did not see it fit to consent and subscribe with the Synod.

Some of those Men seem to have thought, that the Faith lay more in Doctrines and in the Decrees of Men, than it did in Duty, and in the righteous Commands of the Gospel; or that it was intended to furnish the Mind and to fill the Head with critical and curious Explications of Mysteries; rather than to inspire and endow the Heart with grace and love and mercy.

The *Avian* Heriticks were numerous and violent in the East: At length after some Years, the *Savazens*, the Forefathers of the *Turks*, rose against the Eastern Churches and prevailed over them; and took some of their Towns and Countries; which they and their Successours have kept and held in Possession, even until this Day, for now about 1100 Years. It is probable that God suffered that heavy Calamity to fall upon those Churches; because Men were more earnest and concerned for Doctrines, and perhaps for Heretical Opinions, then they were for righteous and good Duty to others. If there had not been some good Men amongst them, who were faithful in the Duty, and denied themselves, and forbore their Pleasures and Profits for it; and valued it above the Doctrines which they or others held; it may be thought, that God would have suffered the Infidels wholly to have suppressed and put down the Churches in the East; as perhaps they did it, in some of those Countries. Thus formerly God has dealt with People, whether they were Heathens Jews or Christians; he bore with them, because he pitied their Persons; and at length he punished or destroyed them, because others were made

to suffer by their Iniquity and Unrighteousness, and it was grievous in his Sight: His Patience and his Punishment may both help to shew, that he is gracious and loving in himself.

His present Goodness shews it. For he has made People, and he maintains them, he feeds and cloaths them, he finds them an Home to rest at; he makes their Food and Cloathing and Rest to be refreshing and strengthening to them; he keeps up and continues to them their Health, and the good Use of their Limbs and Senses and Understanding; he finds Business to employ them in, and succeeds and prospers their Work, that with Care and Moderation it may be sufficient for their Condition; he gives them some Release from necessary Business, some Liberty and leisure Time to themselves; he procures to them Peace and Friendship with their Neighbours; he watches over them for their Security, and keeps them and all that they have in safety; he provides for their Wants and Needs, and also in some Measure for their Conveniences and Delights.

This and a great deal more than this, he does for People, to shew that he is merciful and good, and would have them to be so. But some Persons have not the Belief and Heart to do the good which they might and ought to do, having sufficient Means for it; they much omit and neglect the Duty, or do but little in it; they have the Gospel to perswade them to it, and they take but little notice of the Commands and Motives for it, as if they had not need to be put in mind of it; they look more to the future Reward which they expect and hope for, than they do to the present Work which they are bid to do; they think that some Thing else is more needful and better, than Mercy and Goodness to others is. God is not pleased with such Persons, and yet he continues his Blessing and Goodness to them.

Some Persons seem to think, that there is no Duty greater and better than the worship of God is; for thereby they shew that they own and acknowledge him to be God, and to be their God; upon whom they depend for Blessing Grace and Life; thereby they glorifie him, and do him an Honour and Service. which he requires and is pleased with. If then such Persons are somewhat constant in this Duty; if they worship him publicly, in the
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outward Way which Men have told them is taught in his Word ; if in their private Worship they can speak to him, as it were, in his own Language and call upon him in Scripture-Words and Expressions, and can plead his own Promises before him ; or if they can pray and give Thanks to him, with an attentive sensible affectionate Mind and Heart ; and in Faith, or with a Belief, that from the Intercession of Christ, he hears and regards them : They then doubt not but they have his Grace in them, and are assisted with his Spirit, and are his new-born holy accepted People. ——— but if we have not as much Mind to the Duty, which we owe to others, as we have to the Duty, which we owe to him ; he will not be well pleased with us.

Again some Persons seem to believe and trust in such a Christ as their Teachers have described and commended to them ; a Christ who has fulfilled all Righteousness for them ; and has abrogated the Law, and taken away the Necessity of the real good Works and Duties of it ; and bids them, and invites and intreats them to come to him and to believe in him, and to trust upon his Work and upon his Redemption ; and not upon their own imperfect sinful Works ; and then they may assure themselves upon his Word and Promise. *John xiv. 19. That because he lives, they shall live also :* And by trusting wholly upon him, they are confident of it, that they are in the Covenant of the Gospel, and do set forth the Grace and Glory of God ; that they are the true Christians, the Believers, who have Justification and Life promised to them ; that they are safe and out of Danger, and are at Liberty, and may do almost what they will ; that their Christ, in whom they believe and trust, will not fail them ; he has died for them, and he will take good Care of them, that they shall not be lost and perish. A dear sweet blessed Christ indeed ! ——— But this is not the Christ, whom the Gospel bids us to hear and believe ; whom God sent to take away the Sin of the World, and to bless us in turning us from our Iniquity.

Again, the Scripture teaches the whole Mind and Will of God, it is a perfect Rule of Duty : And some Persons would seem to be ruled and guided by it in all that they do. Therefore they do not suffer their Children to be baptized, until they are taught to understand their Du-

ty, and are perswaded and converted to it, and are willing to be baptized to shew that they are so. They do not receive the Lord's Supper kneeling, as Church People do; but sitting; which is nearer the Posture of Christ and his Disciples, when he bid, that it should be received in remembrance of him. They do not eat Blood, nor any Thing made with Swine's Blood in it. They do not approve and like well of it, that their should be Majestrates and Governors to command and over rule them and Christian People; for Christ tells his Disciples and says plainly. *Matth. xx. 26 It shall not be so amongst you.* Nor do they approve and like well of it, that Tithes should be paid to Church-Ministers; for they are the Servants of Men, more than they are of God; they keep the Orders of Men, but they do much misuse and pervert the Ordinances of God, and do many Things in them, for which they have no Command from him. And besides when Christ sent out Disciples to preach, *Luke x. 7, &c. He gave them leave to eat and drink such Things as the People gave and set before them:* But he did not give them leave to demand and require them Things of the People, and to get them as it were by force: They might receive what the People were pleased to give, but the People were not to be compelled to give it: Therefore they do not think it to be sinful, or displeasing to God, if they do not pay Tithes short; or if they do withhold them, and not pay them at all to Church-Ministers; for they are an Exaction and Imposition upon them, contrary to that Order of Christ. Some, though not all of them, have been baptized indeed; not sprinkled but dipt into their Profession; and they did receive their Baptism, not as a Means to obtain Grace to sanctifie them; but as a Testification and Proof of Grace already or before obtained and received; and of Sanctification already or before made and wrought in them: For it was then, and it is still their Mind and Purpose, to serve God according to his Word, and not to do any Thing in his Service, for which they have not his Warrant in it. They matter not the Favour or Displeasure of Men; their Work is with God; they keep his Commandments, they do not Swear, nor break the Sabbath, nor steal, nor do any evil wicked Thing that he forbids; they keep his Ordinances, as he has himself appointed them to be kept; they do not add
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to them, nor diminish from, nor alter them; as some Men do boldly dare to do.

They value not the Doctrines, which some Men have an high Esteem for, as about God's Election and Reprobation, about the Extent and Efficacy of the death of Christ, about the Power and Work of converting, sanctifying Grace, about the Ability or Inability of Man to fulfil the Law: Their Religion does not lie in Doctrines, nor in the Determinations of Men about them; but it lies in keeping the Commandments and Ordinances of God according to his Word and Mind. They have not that Confidence and Assurance in themselves that some People pretend to have from their Faith; but they have some good Hope, that God for Christ's sake accepts them, and accounts them to be his People, and will make good his Promises to them: He is the true and faithful God, to keep Covenant and Mercy, with them who keep Covenant with him, and to reward them who serve him truly; as they hope they do, and do desire to do ——— This may seem to some Persons to be a goodly holy Profession; but it has Iniquity and Injustice in it; and besides that, it has not any Thing in it, no not in the least Part of it, that does or can indeed please a good and righteous God.

Thus some Persons make one Thing, and some another Thing, almost the whole of their Religion; which they think God requires for its own sake, and is pleased with it in and by it self; and therefore they are observant of it, as if it was the great Command or the one Thing necessary; they trust and hope in him upon it. But if it has some Relation to him, it has not much to others; it scarce does any Body any good, it scarce has any Tendency thereto; it seldom perswades them to deny themselves, and to bear the Cross, for the benefit of others; it quietly permits them to get and save what they can by Law; they think it to be no Iniquity and Offence to require full Duty and strict Justice from others; and they often think it to be hard, that they should be made to do it themselves; they have more Mind to their own Desire and Gains, than they have to a righteous Duty; they scarce have more of the good Man and the Christian in them, or more Mind to do as they would be done unto, than some Heathens have in them.

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And yet God seems to be at Peace with them, he restrains his Displeasure, he keeps off heavy Afflictions from them, he gives them the Conveniences of Life sufficiently and some Times abundantly; as if they were indeed the good Persons. which they take themselves to be. But he has told them that they must be judged by their Works, that is by their Doings to others, that whatever they trust to, they may take heed and be careful to do the righteous and good Duty to them, which they ought to do; lest at length they be condemned for Unbelievers.

The former and present Long-suffering and Goodness of God may help to shew and prove, that he is essentially and naturally Gracious; that Love and Mercy and Goodness to others, is the Disposition of his Heart, and the Temper of his Mind and Spirit, and is that, which in and from himself he is pleased with and loves, and is most delighted in it.

Therefore Love and Mercy and Goodness to others is the first and great Commandment; or it is the Duty which he requires of us before any Thing else.

For that which is so, must be that which is most agreeing with his Mind, and is best pleasing to him in the Thing it self; and since Love and Mercy and Goodness is the Sense and Temper of his Mind and Heart; it must needs be, that the Work and Duty of it, be most agreeing thereto, and most acceptable and pleasing to him of any Thing that we can do.

It is by such Duty most especially, that we must express and shew, our Obedience and Submission to him, our Respect and Reverence for him, our Love, our Fear of him, our Hope and Trust in him, our Humility Sorrow and Repentance for Iniquity, and our Faith in Christ, and Dependance upon him, our Regeneration, or being led by his Spirit, and walking and living in it, our Moderation and Self-denial; or if there be any Thing else, that must help to make us his People, we must I say shew that we have it in us especially by our Love and Goodness to others; For he will look upon us to have no more of those, or other Graces Vertues or Duties in us, than we have of that Love in us. He is inclined from himself and from his own Mind and Temper, to be pleased with those good People, who have that Love in them

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them to keep and bless them, and at length to take them to himself, as his elected holy People, as his true natural and dear Children.

But as to selfish unrighteous People, who have more Mind to their own Desires and Satisfactions, than they have to Love and Mercy and Goodness to others; his is inclined from his own Heart and Nature, to dislike them, to be displeased with them, to withdraw his Blessings from them; and at length to put them from him, to cast them quite off, to condemn them; for being workers of Iniquity, or for being an unprofitable reprobate People, that were good for little or nothing, and that would be brought to no good.

C H A P. VI.

Love was the Disposition and Mind, of the Lord Jesus Christ.

CH R I S T taught great Things about Love and Mercy and good Duty to others; which were but little known or considered before, *As that it is the Law and the Prophets*, Math. vii. 12. *That it is the Mind and Will, the Nature and Temper of God, for there is none good but one, that is God*, Math. xix. 17. *That he will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice*, Math. ix. 13. *That it is the Mercy and the Truth, and the Life, and no Man cometh unto the Father, but by it*, John xiv. 6. *That the Mind and Care for it, must be greater, than for Food and Cloathing*, Math. vi. 33. *And greater, than the Love for Father or Mother*, Math. x. 37. *That People must be renewed and converted to it*, Joh. iii. 5. *And must exceed those in it, who were reputed to be the best Men amongst the Jews*, Math. v. 20, *or they will in no Case be suffered to enter into the Kingdom above. That they must be judged by it*, Math. xxv. 34, &c. *That it is the Law which cannot be repealed; the least Duty of it cannot be remitted and annulled. For verily I say unto you, till Heaven and Earth pass, one jot or one Tittle shall in no wise pass from that Law, till all be fulfilled*, Math. v. 18. These Things Christ declared and taught, and they are great

Motives

38 *Love was the Disposition and Mind,* Chap. 6.

Motives to righteous and good Duty to others, and great Reasons for the Necessity of it.

Christ did much perswade and exhort to it. As *Math. v. 16. Let your Light so shine before Men that they may see your good Works, and glorifie your Father which is in Heaven.* ver. 42. *Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away.* ver. 44. *Love your Enemies, bless them that curse you, do Good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you.* *Luke vi. 35, 36. Do good and lend, hoping for nothing again. Be merciful as your Father also is merciful.* *Luke xii. 32, 33. It is your Fathers good Pleasure to give you the Kingdom, sell that ye have and give Alms.* *Math. x. 42. Whosoever shall give to drink a Cup of cold Water only, in the name of a Disciple (or to a good Person) verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his Reward.* He bid the Man who came to him, to know what good Thing he should do, that he might have eternal Life. *Math. xix. 21. Sell that thou hast and give to the Poor, and thou shalt have Treasure in Heaven.* He bid another who came with the like Request. *Luke x. 37. To do as the Samaritane did, who had Compassion on the Man, that fell into the Hands of Thieves.* He bid another, *Luke. xiv. 13. When thou makest a Feast, call the Poor, the Maimed, the Lame, the Blind, and thou shalt be blessed, &c.* He bid another, who was curious about legal Purifications, *Luke xi. 41. Rather give Almes of such Things as you have, and behold all Things are clean unto you.* He called Love to others a new Commandment, and his Commandment, and the Property, and Mark of his People. *John xv. 12 This is my Commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.* *John xiii. 34. 35. A new Commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you.* By this shall all Men know, that ye are my Disciples, if ye have love one to another. He declared, *Math. xxv. 40, 45. That he shall take the Good that is done, or that is not done, to a merciful and righteous Person, as done, or as not done unto himself.*

Christ did as other Men do, whose Work it is to teach: They do much press that which in the Sense of their Mind and Heart, they think to be the greatest and the best Duty: Whither it be Justice, or Sobriety and Abstinence, or Worship, Prayer and the Ordinances of Religion, or Reverence, or the awful Fear of God, or

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Faith in, or in trust Christ upon his Redemption, or any Thing else: And they must insist much upon it, and be often and earnestly perswading to it; or they will not themselves like well of what they do: They may teach other Things, as useful and in order to it, or as good in their Places; but not as principally necessary, not as best pleasing to God in the Things themselves: If they should teach so of any Thing else, they would not believe their own teaching; their Mind and Conscience would accuse them of false teaching, and would tell them, their Doctrine is not right and true: They may be mistaken, and have a false or erroneous Sense and Judgment in them, and may think that to be the great Duty, which is not so; but as they think it to be so, so their Conscience will incline and press them to teach it, and to perswade to it, as if it was indeed the great Duty.

And since Christ did so often and so earnestly exhort to all good Duty to others, and to that only; and to other Things in order to it; it is some Proof or Sign, that he was prompted and moved to do it, from his own Heart, from his inward Belief and Sense of the Duty; and that Mercy and Goodness was the Disposition of his Mind and Nature.

The Example of Christ was the same with his Doctrine; he did himself that which he bid his Disciples and Men to do; he shewed great Goodness to all People; he released and freed the afflicted from their affliction, and gave Health, Strength, Soundness, Ease, to the Sick, the Impotent, the Maimed, the Tormented; he was ready and willing to do it; he denied his help to none that wanted it, and asked it, though they had formerly been Sinners; he made it his daily Business to do good; he went from Place to Place, and took all Opportunities for it, and continued to do it, though he was reviled and envied for it. *Acts x. 38. He went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil, for God was with him*; he seldom employed his Power otherwise than in Works of Mercy and Goodness to others; sometimes he had Compassion upon People, even for their Hunger, and fed them, that they might not faint.

Christ was gentle with his Disciples or Apostles, whom he had ordained to be with him; he bore with their Infirmities; he taught them what it was needful and good
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for them to know, and diligently and carefully expounded and explained Things to them; he instructed their Ignorance, and rectified their Mistakes and Errors with righteous Reasonings, he dealt plainly with them, and foretold to them the bad Usage, that first he himself, and that they afterwards should have from the World; and he made them gracious Heavenly Promises to Strengthen them, that they might not be disheartned and perverted, when they should come to suffer it; he used them as he used himself, and put them to no greater Labour, Hardship or Danger, than he endured or exposed himself unto; if there was any Thing worse than ordinary, he undertook that himself; he did not put them to do Cures on the Sabbath-day; but he did them himself on that Day; and the *Jews* persecuted him, and sought to slay him for it. *John v. 16.* He was more as a Servant or as a Father, than as a Master to them; *Luke xxii. 27. I am among you as he that Serveth.*

Christ was loving and good to others. He healed the Servant of the Roman-Centurion upon his Request, and did much commend him for his Care of the poor Servant, and declared unto the People, that he had not seen an Instance of so much good Nature and human Compassion amongst the *Jews*, as that Roman-Centurion, that Heathen Man was. *Math. viii. 10. Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great Faith, no not in Israel.* He cast out the Devil, and healed the Daughter of the Heathen woman, upon her earnest and important Petition to him for his Help; and did much commend her, for her great Compassion and Concern for the Child. *Math. xv. 28. O Woman? great is thy Faith, be it unto thee, even as thou wilt. He took into his Arms the young Children that were brought unto him, and put his Hands upon them, and blessed them; he was much displeased with his Disciples for attempting to keep them from him. Marke x. 13.* He accepted of Invitations and received Entertainments from Publicans, who were reckoned amongst Sinners, and the worst of Men.

Thereby he shewed that he did not proudly and presumptuously scorn their Persons, and disdain their Company, as the religious *Jews* did; but that he wished them well, and was willing and desirous to shew Love and Friendship towards them; and by his Example, to excite and encourage them to shew it to others; though he

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lost Credit with the *Jews*, and was disrespected and reproached for his familiar Converse with Publicans, and Sinners.

Christ was innocent, and more than innocent towards his Enemies. The Traitor *Judas* had no worse Usage from him, than another chosen Disciple, or Apostle had; though he knew what Mind *Judas* had in him, and what he would do. *John vi. 64. He knew from the Beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.* He accepted Invitations from the *Pharisees*, and did eat and drink with them, when he was asked to do it; thereby he shewed that he had a friendly Mind towards them, though they might have suspicious Thoughts, and not good Intentions towards him. The unbelieving zealous *Jews* were maliciously set against him, and did desire and seek to destroy him: He received and bore the Wrong which they attempted to do to him, and which they did do to him, with Patience and Meekness: He was not moved or provoked by it, against his own Nature and Goodness, to do, or to attempt, or so much as to wish, any hurt to them in return for it: He was grieved at their Unbelief of that Good and Righteous Duty to others, which he taught by his Doctrine, and shewed by his Works and Example, and at their hardness of Heart, and obstinacy against it. He lamented and wept, when he foresaw and considered the sad Destruction, that would be brought upon them for it. *Luke xix. 41. He beheld the City. and wept over it, saying if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy Day, the Things which belong unto thy Peace! But now they are hid from thine Eyes, &c.* when he was dying by their procurement, and as it were under their Hands, he prayed for them, and pleaded their Ignorance, as some Excuse or Mitigation for their Wickedness and Murder. *Luke xxiii. 34. Father forgive them, for they knew not what they do.* Thus then the Doctrine and Teaching, the Works and Doings, the Conversation of Christ, do shew and prove that he was one, who loved Righteousness and hated Iniquity, who was full of Grace and Truth; that Love and Mercy and Goodness to others, was the Disposition of his Mind and Heart.

Christ is the best interpreter of the Gospel, and of the Instructions given in it: The Judgments of Men are not the same about several of them: It may be, that we under-

42 *Love was the Disposition and Mind,* Chap. 6.

derstand but imperfectly and uncertainly; what it is to love God with all the Heart *Math. xx. 37. What the Will of God is, which he that doth, shall enter into Heaven. Math. vii. 21. What it is to keep the Commandments. Math. xix. 17. What the Rightness of God and of his Kingdom is, which is first to be sought. Math. vii. 33. What it is to believe in Christ. John iii. 16. What that Saying of his is, which he that keeps shall never see Death. John vii. 51. What it is to learn of him. Math. xi. 29. To follow him. Math. xvi. 24. To keep his Commandments. John xv. 10. What it is to be born of the Spirit. John iii. 5. What the Repentance is, which Christ came to call Sinners unto Luke v. 32. Math. iv. 13. Christ did the Duties or had the Graces of those Instructions, and was intirely and perfectly such a one, as is meant and intended by them. And if we consider the Disposition and Mind of Christ and his Doings, it may help to perswade us, that all those Duties and Graces are contained in Love and Mercy and Goodness to others, that they are all expressed and shewed by it, and do all tend to it and end in it. And if we are really merciful and good to others, and to do unto them as we would be done unto; we shall then be esteemed to be such as love God, and do his Will, and keep the Commandments, and seek first his Rightness; such as believe in Christ, and keep his Saying, and learn of him, and follow him, and keep his Commandments; such as are born again of the Spirit, and are renewed and sanctified by it; such as are called to Repentance, and by Grace are converted to Goodness; we shall then be esteemed to be such as believe and observe all the Commands and Instructions of the Gospel. It is intended, that we should be merciful and good to others, heartily, in some Degree as Christ was. *John xiii. 15. 17. I have given you an Example, that ye should do as I have done, happy are ye if ye do it. Math. xi. 29. Take my Yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in Heart, and ye shall find Rest unto your Souls. Tit. ii. 14. He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works. Rom. viii. 29. God did predestinate, that we should be conformed to the Image of his Son, that he might be the First born among many Brethren.* The good and gracious Disposition and Nature of Christ, inclines him to love such good People, to interceed for them, to plead and ap-
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ply his Sufferings and Redemption for their Justification ; to take Care of them, to comfort them, to order all Things for their Good ; because they have the same Mind and Heart in them, as he had, and has in him, and are in some Measure such as he was : Therefore he looks upon them, to be Believers in him, to be Followers of him, to be his true Disciples, his faithful Servants, his Friends, his Brethren.

C H A P. VII.

Love and Goodness to others is the principal, if not the only Grace and Vertue, which the Holy Ghost works in those good People, whom he renews and sanctifies.

THE Holy Ghost not only suppresses, or abates, and weakens strong, selfish, natural Desires in People ; but he also works good Desires and Dispositions, and a righteous Sense and Mind in them ; he perswades them to believe assuredly that Love and Mercy, and Goodness to others, is the great and only Duty, that pleases God ; he remembers them often of it, and is often suggesting to them and urging upon them, Thoughts about it, and Motives to it ; he inspires and impresses the Belief and Sense of it into their Hearts ; he stirs up in them Cares for it, and an humble sorrowful Concern for their Neglects and Failings in it ; he minds and moves them to pray to God, to pardon them their Failings in it, and to keep them from Iniquity and from Temptations thereto, and to help them to do the Duty effectually and faithfully ; he comforts them thereupon, and gives them Hope of a gracious Acceptance with God. The Holy Ghost settles and increases, and strengthens (the Belief and Sense of that Duty in them) the Belief and Sense of that Duty (*viz.* of Love and Mercy, and Goodness to others) in them, above their natural Desires, and against outward Conveniences and Inconveniences ; that it may become the ruling Principle of Action in them, and may be their Guide and Direction, their Aim and End in all that they do ; that it

may not only with-hold them from Sin and Iniquity, but that it may also perswade them to shew Love, and to do good, in the best Measure and Manner they can. By the Suggestion and Working of the Holy Ghost in them, and by the Tendency of that Belief and Sense, they are made truly, that is, sincerely innocent, just, faithful, peaceable, forgiving, merciful, and good; they have as much Regard to the Good of others, as they have to their own Good; they like it better, and do chuse to bear the Cross, and to suffer the Wrong, that may be born, rather than to exact Satisfaction, and to revenge it; they deny themselves, and want some Conveniences rather than be wanting in Duty and Goodness. Such good People are renewed and sanctified; they have the Grace of God in them; they are led by his Spirit; they are born of God; they are the Children of God by Regeneration, by the righteous, gracious, god-like Mind and Heart, that is made in them

The Gospel teaches, that Love and Mercy, and Goodness to others, is the only or principal Work of the Holy Ghost. *Eph. v. 9* *The Fruit of the Spirit is in all Goodness, and Righteousness, and Truth* *Gal. v. 22.* *The Fruit if the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance* *James iii. 17.* *The Wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be intreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits, without Partiality, and without Hypocrisy* The Apostle bids us, *Eph. iv. 23, 24.* *To be renewed in the Spirit (or in the Sense and Temper) of our Mind, and to put on the new Man, which after God is created in Righteousness, and true Holiness:* Then he bids us, not only to forbear malicious hurtful Passions and Doings; but he also bids us, *ver. 32.* *To be kind, tender-hearted, forgiving, as God for Christ's Sake is so to us;* whereby he teaches, that to be so, is to be renewed unto the Righteousness and Holiness of God. So again, *Col. iii. 10, 12, &c.* He bids us to put on Mercies, Kindness, Meekness, Forgiveness, Charity, &c. whereby he teaches, that this is to put on the new Man, *Ver. 10.* *And to have a Sense of these Duties, and an Heart and Mind for them, is to be renewed in Knowledge after the Image of him that created us* *1 John ii. 29.* *If ye know that he is righteous, ye know, that every one that doth Righteousness is born of him.* *1 John iv. 7, 8.* *Beloved, let us love one another, for Love is of God; every one that*

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that loveth, is born of God and knoweth God; he that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is Love. Ver. 12 and 13 If we love one another God dwelleth in us, and his Love is perfected in us; hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit; or because he hath given us a Sense and Mind for Love and Goodness. 1 John iii. 10 In this the Children of God are manifest, and the Children of the Devil; whosoever doth not Righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his Brother; which implies, that he that loves his Brother, and doth Righteousness, is of God, and is a Child of God.

Rom v 5 Hope maketh not ashamed, because the Love of God is shed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. Here the Apostle seems to say, that Love and Goodness to others, was the great Work of the Holy Ghost in them; it sanctified them; it purified them from their selfish and temporal Desires; it made them loving and merciful, gracious and righteous to others, and acceptable to God; it was the great Ground and Matter of their Comfort; for therefore they were not ashamed, because they had it inspired, and wrought in them.

The Love of God is the Love of Goodness; it is an hearty Good-will to others; it is a Disposition and Mind that looks to their Good, and make us willing and ready to effect and further it as we may; it pleases and rejoices us when we can do so. This Love of Goodness and Mind for it, is called the Love of God, because it is from God, it is the Work of his Spirit in us; and it is called so more properly, because it is a Love of the same Kind and Nature, with the Love that God has in himself; that is, it is pure and sincere, true and hearty; it is not debased and depraved with private Intentions and Designs of our own; it wishes well to all People, it intends only that which is innocent and just, or right and good to them. whatever Relation, or whatever Mind they have towards us. There are some Expressions and Places in the Gospel, which may help to perswade us, that this Mind and Love for Goodness to others, is that which is intended by the Love of God. 1 John iv. 12. If we love one another God dwelleth in us, and his Love (or the Love that is in God) is perfected in us. 1 John iii 17. Whoso hath this Worlds good and seeth his Brother have need, and shutteth up his Bowels of Compassion from him, how dwelleth the Love of God in him, or he has not that Heart

Heart and Mind for Goodness in him, that is in God. 1 John ii. 15. *If any Man love the World, the Love of the Father (or the Love that is in the Father) is not in him.* Christ says to the Jews, John v. 42 *I know you, that ye have not the Love of God in you; or ye have no Mind to the Mercy and Goodness, which I am come in my Father's Name to persuade to.* Unrighteous, evil, selfish People are called Haters of God, Rom i. 30. *Backbiters, Haters of God, despiteful, proud, &c.* not that they hate God himself, or his Person; but they have an inward Dislike, which is a Degree of Hatred, to the Mercy and Goodness to others, which God loves and commands before any Thing else; they may be said to hate him, because they dislike, and in some Degree hate the Duty which he requires. Rom. viii. 7. *The carnal Mind is Enmity against God (or Hatred of God) for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither in deed can be.* The Love of God then is the Love of Goodness to others; it is a Mind and Heart free and disposed for it.

Some Persons have another Opinion of the Nature of this Grace; they think that the Love of God, is a loving Affection, a kind Disposition of Heart towards him; it makes them willing to think much upon him, to pray to him, and to worship him; it gives them comfort from communion with him; it persuades them to think and hope, that he has as great a Love for them, as they have for him: But they have but little Love for Goodness to others, and do but little in it of what they should do. Such Lovers of God may be likened unto the second Son in the Parable, Math. xxi. 28, &c. *The Father bid him, Son, go work to Day in my Vineyard: the Son answer'd, I go, Sir, but he went not.* It was easy to give a civil Answer, but he did not like the Work, which the Father wanted to have done in his Vineyard. The Work that God wants to have done, is the Work of Righteousness; that People do to others that which is just, and right, and good, that which they would have done unto themselves; he will not accept of a kind Affection and Disposition of Heart expressed in religious Services to him, for Love; although it may be very sensible in them; even although they could sometimes be content to leave the Enjoyments and Delights of this World, and to die; that they go into his Presence, and let him see what an ardent dear Love they have for him. But the Love of God, which the Apostle says,

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says, *Rom. v. 5. Was shed abroad in their Hearts by the Holy Ghost*, was the Love of Goodness to others, a Mind free and disposed for it; this was the great Work of the Holy Ghost in them, and it gave them Comfort and Confidence before God and Man.

Christ promised and foretold to the Disciples, *John xvi. 13. When the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all Truth.* It is probable, that by Truth he meant Love and Goodness to others; that the Spirit should convert them to it, and bring them to believe certainly, and to perceive plainly, the Excellency, the Acceptableness, the Necessity of it; and should make them free, hearty, and effectual in it; and should give them Satisfaction and Rest in their Minds, and hope in God from it.

Truth in the Scriptures seems very often to mean an hearty Desire or Care for the Good of others; it is often joined with Mercy, or with something of the like Nature, or that makes for their Good, *Exod. xxxiv. 6. The Lord God, &c. abundant in Goodness and Truth. Psal xl. 10. I have not concealed thy loving Kindness, and thy Truth from the great Congregation. Psal. lxxxvi. 15. Thou, O Lord, art a God, &c. and plenteous in Mercy and Truth. Psal c. 5. His Mercy is everlasting, and his Truth endureth to all Generations. Psal cxv. 1. For thy Mercy, and for Truth's Sake. Prov. iii. 3. Let not Mercy and Truth forsake thee. Isa. xxvi. 2. The righteous Nation which keepeth the Truth. Zechar. viii. 16. Execute the Judgment of Truth and Peace in your Gates. It is lamented, Isa. lix. 14. Because Truth is fallen in the Street, and Equity cannot enter. And Hosea iv. 1. Because there is no Truth nor Mercy, nor Knowledge of God in the Land. Jerem. v. 1. If there be any that executeth Judgment, that seeketh the Truth I will pardon it, or spare the City. So likewise in the Gospel, *John i. 14. Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ. Eph. v. 9. Goodness, Righteousness, and Truth, are all one and the same Fruit of the same Spirit. Phil. iv. 8 Things true, are mentioned together with Things honest, just, pure, lovely. 1 Cor. v. 8. Let us keep the Feast, not with Malice and Wickedness, but with Sincerity and Truth. 1 John iii. 18. Let us love indeed, and in Truth. 3 John iv. &c. Gaius did faithfully and well to the Brethren and to Strangers, and they bore witness of his Charity before the Church; his doing so was walking in the Truth; and it did rejoice the Apostle to hear it. John the Baptist, Luke iii. 3, &c. Preached Repentance, Innocency,*
*Justice,**

Justice, Equity, Goodness; and Christ tells the Jews, John v. 33. That John bore witness unto the Truth; those good Duties to others which John preached and taught, and the Truth which he bore witness unto, were one and the same Thing. Again, Truth is often set in Opposition to unrighteous evil Doings and Dispositions to others, as being contrary to them, and inconsistent with them; where Truth is, such Doings cannot be, and where such Doings are, Truth cannot be. Gen. xlii. 11. We are true Men, thy Servants are no Spies. Exod. xviii. 21. Men of Truth hating Covetousness. Deut. xxxii. 4. A God of Truth, and without Iniquity, just and right is he. Isa. lix. 4. None calleth for Justice, nor any pleadeth for Truth; they trust in Vanity and speak Lies; they conceive Mischief, and bring forth Iniquity Jer. ix 3. They bend their Tongues for Lies, but they are not valiant for the Truth upon the Earth; for they proceed from Evil to Evil, and they know not me, saith the Lord. In the Gospel likewise, Truth is set against Murder and Lying, John viii. 4. Against Malice and Wickedness. 1 Cor. v. 8. Against Iniquity. 1 Cor. xiii. 6. Against Envy and Strife. Sam iii. 14. The doing Truth is the contrary to doing Evil. John iii. 20, 21. Not to obey the Truth, but to obey Unrighteousnesses. Rom. ii. 8. Is the the same Thing; not to believe the Truth, but to have Pleasures in Unrighteousness 2 Thess ii. 12. Is the same again, corrupt Minds and destitute of the Truth. 1 Tim. vi. 5. Intend the same selfish evil Disposition. From these Expressions we may perceive, that Truth in the Scriptures does very often mean Goodness to others, or an Heart and Mind disposed for it.

Therefore, when Christ foretold to the Disciples, *John xvi. 13. The Spirit of Truth will guide you into all Truth*; it is probable, that he meant that the Holy Ghost would convert and bring them to all good and righteous Duty to others; and would work in them a strong and lively Belief and Sense of it; and would make them free, hearty, constant and effectual in it.

This Prediction and Promise of Christ, and other Texts of the Gospel before-mentioned may shew, that Love and Mercy, and Goodness to others, is the great and principal, and is the the only effectual Grace and Vertue, which the Holy Ghost works in those good People, whom he renews and sanctifies, whom he purifies and prepares for Mercy and Acceptance with God, and for Salvation.

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The gracious Mind that is made in them, is a Guide and a Light to them, to discern both Good and Evil, to perceive the Nature, Use, and End of Things, to judge of them accordingly, to approve and do that which is right and good in itself, or is tending to it and makes for it, and to dislike and forbear that which is not so; it teaches and moves them, to do the Duties of their Place and Condition; to be diligent in their Business; to be moderate in their lawful Enjoyments; to be watchful over themselves, so take heed to their own Hearts and Thoughts, to curb vain Fancies and selfish Desires, and evil Passions, when they begin to arise in them, it teaches and moves them, to esteem and reverence God in their Heart; to acknowledge and confess their Sin and Iniquity; to be humble-minded; to submit to him, to be patient under his afflicting Hand; to be thankful to him for his Mercies and Blessings; to serve and honour him in all the Duties and Ordinances of Worship. It teaches them to know, that it is Sin, Iniquity, Unrighteousness, and not the outward Form of Worship which is not forbid, that does or will offend God; that things are not therefore forbidden, because they are not commanded; that it is their Duty to submit to them that have the Rule over them, in Matters as well of the Church as of the State; that Unity, Peace, and Love, is better kept up amongst People by Submission, than by Dissention; they are not afraid, that they shall offend God by complying to the Orders in Worship appointed by Authority; they use them devoutly for the Purposes of Religion, to obtain Grace and Blessing, to increase the Knowledge and Sense of God and of themselves, of their Duty and of their Sin against it, and Faults in it; they cannot be Dissenters, and value themselves upon it, as some Persons seem to do. That gracious Mind teaches and perswades them to be diligent and faithful in all Duties of all Kinds; and to do all Things, that they may exercise and improve Grace in themselves, and may abound more and more in Love and Goodness. For so their Minds seems to be declated in such Scriptures as these. *Math. vi. 21, 22. Where your Treasure is, there will your Heart be also, if thine Eye be single thy whole Body shall be full of Light.* *Math. vii. 18. A good Tree cannot bring forth evil Fruit.* *1 Cor. ii. 15. He that is spiritual judgeth all Things.*

2 Cor. v. 17. If any Man be in Christ he is a new Creature, old Things are passed away, behold all Things are become new. 1 John iii. 3. Every Man that hopes to see and enjoy Christ, purifieth himself, even as he is pure. 2 Cor. xiii. 8. We can do nothing against the Truth, but for the Truth.

Some Persons hope they are converted because they have left off some vain or ungodly, or sinful Courses, in which they had given themselves too much Liberty; and are become mindful of the Services of God, and do think upon him, and have some Comfort therein, and some Hope of his Peace and Good-will towards them: But they are not made more innocent, just, faithful, more merciful and good, more conscientious to do to others, as they would be done unto themselves, nor perhaps are they made so much as willing or desirous to be so; they have still more Mind to their own Satisfaction and Purposes, than they have to that Duty and Goodness. Such People are not truly converted and renewed, they are yet destitute of the best Part of Sanctification; the great and only effectual Work of the Holy Ghost is still wanting to be done in them. It may be questioned, whether God will own them as they are, for his People. It is not enough, we are not grossly bad People, we must be really and heartily good People to be accepted. Gal. v. 24. They that are Christ's, have crucified the Flesh with the Affection and Lusts. Rom. viii. 9. If any Man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his. 1 John iii. 14. He that loveth not his Brother abideth in Death.

C H A P. VIII.

The saying, that a miraculous Work of Mercy and Goodness was done by Beelzebub, was Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost; the Sin that would not be forgiven

MATH xii 22, &c. *Then was brought unto Christ, one possessed with a Devil, blind and dumb; and he healed him, in so much that the Blind and Dumb both spake and saw; and all the People were amazed and said, is not this the Son of David? But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, this Fellow doth not cast out Devils, but by Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils.* Christ told them, that it was very unlikely and morally impossible that it should be so; as that Satan should cast out his own Subject his Servant, his Friend, his Brother; and should with his own Hands pull down his own House. It would have been strange indeed, if the worst and most malicious of the Devils should for Mercy and Goodness Sake, have helped and healed a poor, possessed, afflicted Man: If the Devil could do so, perhaps he might become a Penitent and a Convert, and then perhaps he might have Mercy and Pardon from God. Christ shewed them the Danger of saying so, or at least of affirming it, and persisting in it; for it would be a very provoking Offence, it would be deeply resented, it would not be forgotten. *Ver. 31, 32 Wherefore, I say unto you, all Manner of Sin and Blasphemy shall be forgiven unto Men; but the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto Men. And whosoever speaketh a Word against the Son of Man it shall forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this World, nor in the World to come*

In healing the Man, not only the Power but also the Mercy and Goodness of God, was employed and shewed. In saying it was done by Beelzebub, they denied both these;

it was bad to deny his Power, it was worse to deny his Mercy and Goodness: Which God shewed upon the Man, with an Intention and Desire to convert People to Mercy and Goodness; to perswade them into a Belief of the Excellency and Acceptableness of the Duty, and by his own Example to incline and excite them to it; but by denying it, they opposed his Intention and Desire, and hindered the Conversion at least of some People, and held them still in their Unbelief and Unrighteousness. To do this, or even to attempt to do it, by saying the Work was done by *Beelzebub*, was more displeasing to the righteous Mind of God, than perhaps the Denial of his Being would have been; for they took away his Mercy and Goodness from him, and gave it to the Devil; and obstructed the Belief of it, and Conversion to it. Therefore the Blasphemy, which they were charged with, or warned to take heed of, did not lie in saying, that a Work which God did, considered barely as his Work, wherein his Power only was shewed, was done by *Beelzebub*; but its lay in saying, that a Work of Mercy and Goodness which God did, wherein his Mercy and Goodness as well as his Power were shewn, was done by *Beelzebub*: This was the Blasphemy; and if it was persisted in, it would not be forgiven to them.

The saying that a miraculous Work of Mercy and Goodness done by the immediate Hand of God, was done by *Beelzebub*; had these Evils and Mischiefs employed in it, or following from it.

1. It was in Effect, and by Consequence to make God and *Beelzebub* near equal and alike; to ascribe the Goodness, and to give the Glory of God to the Devil; to confound their two Kingdoms, and mingle Heaven and Hell together; to make the one to be but little better than the other; People would scarce know which is which, or who is who, or whither to go for help. *Ahaziah, 2 Kings i. 2. Will as soon send to the God of Ekron, as to the God of Israel. If Saul, 1 Sam. xxviii. 6, &c. May not have an Answer from the Lord, he will go to the Witch for one thinking Satan will be Samuel.* The Heathen sacrificed Beasts, and sometimes sacrificed their own Children, or burnt them in the Fire, in Devotion and Service to their Gods; being deluded to hope that their Gods had Goodness, or I should say

say power enough to help them if they could be moved to do it.

2. It was to debase and disparage Mercy and Goodness; to dishearten People in it; to dictate to them, to think, that there was no more Duty or Vertue in it, than what the evil Spirits, the Worst of the Creature, had in them and could shew and do it to others. If People think so, they must need think, that something else is much better, and more needful than Mercy and Goodness is; they must needs have but little Mind to it, and but little Comfort from it; for when they have improved themselves, and done what they can in it, even then, the very wicked Devils, (as they think) do or may exceed, and out-do them.

3. It was to hinder the Design of real true Miracles which God did, and to take away from them the special distinguishing Property, by which they might be known or discerned from the pretended seeming Miracles, or from the Wonders which the evil Angels did. True Miracles which God did, were to teach and to confirm Truth and Righteousness, Love and Mercy, and Goodness: The seeming Miracles or Wonders, which the evil Angels did, were to teach something from it, if not contrary to it; something which might help to take off the Minds of People from it, and to lessen the Esteem and Care they had for it. And if it was believed, that the evil Angels might do Works of real Mercy and Goodness, then People could not know, what to resolve or think of any Miracle that was done; as whither it might come from above or from below, whither it might have the Hand of God, or of *Beelzebub* in it; neither could they know what Use to make of it, or what to learn and observe, and do from it.

These Things followed from the saying, that a Work of Mercy and Goodness done by the Spirit of God, was done by *Beelzebub*. But these Things would not so certainly have followed from the saying so of a Work of Power only; if Christ had done a Work, wherein the Power of God only had appeared, to have said it had been done by *Beelzebub*, would indeed have been impious and wicked against God: But it would not have made the Devil better or greater than he was, nor have given

54 *Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, Chap. 8.*

given Power or any Thing else to him which he had not, nor have made God and him more equal than they really were; it would not have vilified and debased Mercy and Goodness, nor have discouraged People from it; it would not have confounded Miracles and Wonders together, nor have made it doubtful to People, whether a Miracle of Mercy and Goodness was done by the Spirit of God, and whether it was intended to persuade them to the Duty or not.

The fallen Angels have great Power in them, and by Permission can do great Things, or enable Men to do them, which may look like Miracles; but they have no Goodness, no Mind for it in them; it was for their Declining in it, and falling away from it, that they were cast out of Heaven; if they help any Persons, or seem to do a present good Work, they do it to and amongst People, who are somewhat like unto themselves, who have but little Mind for the Duty, and it may be feared are deserted of God; and they do it with a mischievous Design, that they may the more effectually deceive some or other, and may encourage and lead them on, in some false Opinion, and in some Sin or Iniquity, till at length they perish. Christ says, *Math. vii. 22. &c. Many will say to me in that Day, Lord, Lord have we not prophesied in thy Name, and in thy Name have cast out Devils, and in thy Name done many wonderful Works; and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you (or I never did approve and like well of you) depart from me ye that work Iniquity.* If it is not certain they did cast out Devils by a Power from the Prince of the Devils, yet it is certain, that notwithstanding if they did cast them out, they were not themselves good Men; they had more Mind to their own Desires and Designs, than they had to Mercy and Goodness, and that made them Workers of Iniquity, and put them out of Favour with Christ; and it is likely, that they were made the more Confident and Secure in their Iniquity, from the wonderful which they did, by whose Power soever it was that they did them. Christ foretold, that strange Things would be done, and that they would be dangerous and apt to seduce and draw People from the true and right Way. *Math. xxiv. 24. There shall arise false Christs and false Prophets, and shall shew great Signs and Wonders; inasmuch, that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the very Elect.* He

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does not say, that they shall do Works of Mercy and Goodness, but Signs and Wonders, or Things that would appear to be above the common Power of Man to do; insomuch, that some People who have some Mind for Mercy and Goodness, may at first Sight, before they have well considered Things, be uncertain what to think about them; as whither something else which those Men, that shew the Wonders, profess or teach, be not as needful and good, as that Duty is. Christ warned his People to look for such Signs and Wonders, and to be aware of them when they did appear. *Ver. 25. Behold (saith he) I have told you before.* The Apostle speaks of such Signs and Wonders, and calls them the Working of Satan, and teaches that such People as have not an Heart and Mind for Mercy and Goodness in them, will therefore, even for that Reason, be suffered to be deceived, and led away by them to their Destruction. *2 Thess. ii. 9, &c. The Working of Satan is with all Power and Signs and lying Wonders, and with all Deceivableness of Unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the Love of the Truth, that they might be saved, and for this Cause God shall send them strong Delusion, that they should believe a Lie, that they all might be damned, who believed not the Truth, but had Pleasure in Unrighteousness.* The fallen Angels then might have done wonderful Things of Power and Subtility, which might have seemed to have been miraculous; but it did not follow from thence, that they might have done wonderful Things of Mercy and Goodness; for it was contrary to their Mind and Nature to do them. Therefore those Pharisees did reproach and believe Christ, and did blaspheme God and the Holy Ghost, who said, that the supernatural Works of Mercy and Goodness which Christ did were done by Assistance from the Chiefest of the fallen Angels.

Love and Goodness is the Temper of the Spirit and Mind of God, it is his greatest Excellency, of his greatest Glory, he is highly pleased with it in himself; it is spread through Heaven, it is the Temper of his Angels and Saints, it is their Glory and their Happiness, it is the Grace for which God esteems and loves them as his dear Sons; it is the fundamental and unalterable Law of his Kingdom, it is the Support of the

the Welfare, Peace, and Friendship of it; it is the Grace and Duty, that he would have in People before any, or all other Duty; he sends and employs his holy Spirit to perswade them to it; it is the Sense and Intent of his Law and Word, the Commands and Instructions thereof are Motives to it; it is the Truth of Religion, which without it, is but an empty Form and Profession, and will at last deceive them that shall hope to be saved by it; without it People will be accounted comparatively, but as Tares, as chaff, as fruitless Trees which are to be burnt; they will be accounted as Hypocrites, as Workers of Iniquity, as evil Doers, and will be cast away to perish; it is Grace and Righteousness in People, that makes them innocent, just, faithful, loving, and good to others; it expresses and shews forth the Goodness and the Glory of God in them; it procures the Mercy, Favour, and Blessing of God to them; it gives them inward Peace and true Satisfaction in themselves, and a well-grounded lasting Hope and Comfort, which does and will bear them up, in outward Troubles, in Death, in Judgment. Love and Goodness to others, is a very great and necessary, and good and acceptable Duty; therefore God did much desire, that the *Jews* might have been perswaded to it; that they might have been partakers of his Nature and Spirit; and that they might have had the like Mind and Heart in them as he has in himself; that so he might have owned them for his People, and loved them as his Children, and have made them Heirs of his Salvation; he sent his only begotten Son to them in the human Nature, to perswade them to the Duty; by all the greatest Motives that could be proposed; to shew it by his Carriage, and by his good and merciful Doings; to do miraculous Works of it amongst them; and thereby to give and shew them God's own Example, and his Approbation of it.

But the confident *Jews* were hardened against Conviction, they could not themselves believe in Christ, that is, they could not believe the Duty to be necessary and good above all other Duty, as he taught it to be; they were not willing; that the People should believe in him, and should believe the Duty to be so; they spoke against him to discredit him with the People; they said, that he was not

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the Christ, *John vii. 27. We know this Man whence he is ; but when Christ cometh, no Man knoweth whence he is. Ver 41. Shall Christ come out of Galilee ? that he was no Prophet, ver. 52 Search and look, for out of Galilee ariseth no Prophet ; that he was not of God, John ix. 16. This Man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath Day ; that he did blaspheme, Mark ii. 7. Why doth this Man speak blasphemies ? John x. 33. For a good Work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy ; that he was a Deceiver, John vii. 12. Nay, but he deceiveth the People ; that he was a sensual Man, and an evil Liver, and kept bad Company, Math. xi. 19. Behold a Man gluttonous, and a Wine-bibber, a Friend of Publicans and Sinners ; that he had the Devil in him, John x. 20. He hath a Devil and is mad, why hear ye him ?* These Things the confident Jews spoke against Christ in the general ; as against a Man, that professed to be a Prophet from God, or to be the Christ who was to come ; not speaking particularly and expressly against one Thing or another, which he taught, or did as a Prophet. Perhaps, these might be the Blasphemies which might be forgiven, and which he might mean when he said, *Math. xii. 31, 32. All manner of Sin and Blasphemy shall be forgiven unto Men, but, &c. And whosoever speaketh a Word against the Son of Man it shall be forgiven him, but, &c.*

To say, that Christ cast out Devils by the Chiefest of them, was worse than all those general Reproaches ; it was spoken more expressly and particularly against the greatest and the best Work, which he did as a Prophet from God ; it did more plainly and directly, belie and reproach, and oppose God and his holy Spirit, by whose immediate Mercy and Power the Devils were cast out ; and therefore it was the greater Wickedness, to say that Christ cast them out by the Chiefest of them ; they did more than barely deny the Work to be the Work of God, they said it was the Work of *Beelzebub* ; which was as much as to say, that the Mercy and Goodness that appeared in it, was not the Mercy and Goodness of God, and was not intended to perswade People to the Duty ; but that it was a dangerous Delusion of the Devil, made and shewn on Purpose to draw People into his Snare. It is likely, that some People, who took the Men that said so, to be wise, holy, good Men, did believe them, or were

inclined to believe them, and to think that it was even so as they said; and were unwilling and afraid to give Attention to Christ, to believe in him, and to be perswaded to the Duty, by any Thing they taught or did.

Since then God has a very great Esteem for Love and Mercy, and Goodness to others, and did much desire that the *jews* might have been converted to it, and might have been perswaded to believe it to be their greatest and best Duty; and since that Reproach of casting out Devils by *Beelzebub*, did hinder the Conversion and Belief at least of some of them, and was in itself notoriously, false, and wicked; therefore it must needs be very displeasing to God, a Blasphemy and Sin that would very hardly, if it could at all be forgiven; it must needs provoke God sooner or later, to cast those blaspheming Men quite off; to forbear to have any more to do with them, for the bringing them to good; to withdraw his Grace from them; to let the Means for their Repentance to be be useless in effectual, and dead to them; and to suffer them to be hardened, and die in their Unbelief and Sin.

The saying of a miraculous Work of Mercy and Goodness that it was done by the Devil, was blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, the Sin that would not be forgiven. This may help to perswade us, that Love and Mercy, and Goodness to others is the great Duty; because blaspheming the Work of God in it, was the great Blasphemy Christ says, *Math. xii. 31. All Manner of Sin and Blasphemy shall be forgiven unto Men, but the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto Men.* He excepts no other Blasphemy from Forgiveness, but the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost; that is, against the Works of Mercy and Goodness (such as was the Healing the possessed Man, *Ver. 22.*) which the Holy Ghost did, with a Design to perswade and bring People to the Duty; if that Blasphemy was of all other Blasphemy, most highly offending and evil in the Sight of God; that Duty which it was spoken against and hindred, must be of all other Duties most highly pleasing and good in his Sight.

It may then concern some of us to take heed, that we do not slight the Duty, and think it to be less needful and good than it really is, and God thinks it to be; that we do not set up in our Esteem and Belief any Thing else about it, as a Profession, or a Form and Way of Worship, or Ordinances, or Services, or a Trust and Confidence in Christ and his Redemption, or an inward Love to the Person of God or of Christ; that we do not think any such Duties as these are, to be better than that Duty is, though they may seem to us, to be more religious, holy, and spiritual; that we do not put the Duty amongst the Works, which the Apostle sets in Opposition to Faith, and calls the Deeds of the Law, and says that no Flesh shall be justified in the Sight of God by them, *Rom. iii. 20, 28.* and *Gal. ii. 16.* That we do not speak against those good People, who have a Sense of the Duty, and do faithfully and well in it, and say in Contempt of them; that they are *Romans* or *Papists*, that they are merit-monger and self-saviours, that they are ignorant and blind, they know not their own Weakness and Misery, nor the absolute Holiness and Justice of God, the Rigour of the Law, nor the Grace of the Gospel; they know not that all the Promises are made in Christ, and will be fulfilled to them, and to them only who believe in him; that therefore as the Apostle says, *Gal. v. 2, & 4. They are fallen from Grace, and Christ shall profit them nothing.* Left by speaking thus against them, we bring a Disesteem upon the Duty, and do make some others to be less mindful of it than they would be; lest we be found to speak against, and to blaspheme the Holy Ghost, or the Grace and Work of the Holy Ghost in those good People; lest we offend God, and provoke him to take away his Grace from us, and to leave us to ourselves to die securely and confidently in a false Faith, and in Unbelief of the Truth.

We may excuse ourselves and say, we know the Duty to be good in its Place, and we hope we are no more wanting in it than many others are; we do not speak against it, as it is a good Duty; we only speak against putting too high a Value upon it, and trusting

too much to it against preferring it before Christ and his Redemption, and Faith in him, and Grace and Life by him; against making the Christian Religion to be no more but good Heathenish Morality—To this it may be answered, that God esteems and approves of the Duty above all Things else, and therefore he will not contentedly suffer, that it should be undervalued and lessened, and that Faith or Ordinances, or any other Duty, should be thought to be better, and that his People should be despised and defamed for it.

The *Jews* might have excused themselves in such like Manner for their speaking against Christ, and might have said—we do not intend any Thing against the Duty, we do as much in it as any others do, we are not afraid or ashamed to let Men see how bounteous and liberal we are to the Poor. But this Jesus Christ, that says he comes from God, would have People to take care of nothing else; neither of the Instructions of our wise and holy Men, nor of the Traditions of our Elders, nor the Statutes of *Moses*; and he does now and then revile us for our Care about them; it is much to be suspected, that under a Shew of that Duty he hides a wicked Mind, which is to bring contempt and neglect upon the Ordinances and Commands, and Law of God; therefore it is but fitting that he should be spoken against and opposed; that he may not draw away ignorant People from the Services of God, unto Looseness and Profaneness, and into Destruction for it—If the *Jews* had made this Excuse, it would not have been accepted; God might have answer'd them, as it is *Hosea* vi. 6. *I desire Mercy and not Sacrifice, and the Knowledge of God more than Burnt-Offerings.*

Men that have not a Mind for the Duty cannot think or speak well of it, or of good People for it; unless they do it with some Restriction or Exception, or unless they commend something else above it; and if they are offended by them in a Point of Religion, or other near Concern, then it is easy and pleasing to speak against them, the Worst they can devise to speak with any seeming Likelihood.

Christ

Christ tells the unbelieving *Jews*, that it was not to be expected, that he himself, or any Thing that he did, should have a good Word from them. *Math. xii. 34. &c.* O Generation of Vipers, how can ye being evil speak good Things? for out of the Abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh. A good Man out of the good Treasure of the Heart bringeth forth good Things; and an evil Man out of the evil Treasure bringeth forth evil Things. But I say unto you, that every idle Word that Men shall speak, they shall give an Account thereof in the Day of Judgment; for by thy Words thou shalt be justified, and by thy Words thou shalt be condemned. Idle Words, or false reproachful Words spoken freely against Mercy and Goodness, or against People for it, do shew and declare the Speaker to be a very bad Man; to have a malicious Heart in him; to be more unhuman than an Heathen; to be such an one as the good and gracious God cannot love or like; to be one fit and deserving to be disowned, and cast off and condemn'd to die. For such idle Words have some Sin and Evil in them; but his Heart and inward Temper, that suggest them and prompts him to speak them, has much more Sin and Evil in it.

1 Cor. xii. 3. I give you to understand, that no Man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and that no Man can say, that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. The Apostle said this of Men that spoke by, or from extraordinary Suggestion or Inspiration; but the like may be said of Men, that think or speak from their own Heart and inward Sense of Christ, who was very loving, merciful, and good to others; No Man that has any Thing of the Spirit and Grace of God in him, can think or speak meanly and slightly, and as it were with Contempt of Christ; or can think or speak otherwise then with a great Respect and Esteem of him, and of the Goodness to others, which he was so highly eminent for; or even of People, who have something of his Goodness in them. It is probable, *St. Peter* spoke from a great Sense and Esteem of the Goodness which he had seen in him, and which he thought to be the Goodness of God, and not of Man only, when he answer'd, *Math. xvi. 16.*

Thou

62 *Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost,* Chap. 8.

Thou art Christ the Son of the living God. Christ said again, ver. 17. *Blessed art thou Simon; for Flesh and Blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven*

That inward Sense and high Esteem of such Goodness, and that Mind for it, which you shew yourself to have, by saying, that I am the Son of God; you have it not from Nature, nor from the Discourse and Reasonings of Men; it is made and inspired in you from above; it is the Work of Grace in you; and it is well for you that you have it; for it is a Foretaken and Pledge of the Salvation, that you will have with my Father in Heaven, ver. 18. *Upon this Rock will I build my Church, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.* Such Goodness to others shall be the especial Property and Grace of my People; it shall be deeply impressed in them, they shall heartily believe it, and profess it, and make it there great Work and Duty; and the Subtlety, Power, and Malice of the Enemy, shall not be able to pervert them from it, or to destroy it in them. Accordingly Christ tells his Disciples, *John xiii. 35. By this shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have Love one to another.* The Apostle says, *Eph. ii. 20. The Church is built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-Stone.* Christian People have that Love and Goodness to others in them, which the Apostles and the Prophets, and Christ above them all, had in them, and professed and taught.

It is offensive and dangerous to speak against the Duty (against Love and Mercy, and Goodness to others) it must certainly be more offensive and dangerous to act against it; as to do that which is wrong and injurious to them, which we would not have done to us, or not to do that which is just and right, and good, which we would have done to ourselves. Such doings come from a selfish unrighteous Heart, and do more Hurt than reproachful Words commonly do; they are much forbidden in the Gospel, and the Vengeance of God is threatned for them.

Heb.

Chap. 8.

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Heb. vi. 4, &c. The Apostle says of them, who have had some Knowledge of the Duty, and of the Doctrine about it, which Christ taught; *That if they fall away, it is impossible to renew them again unto Repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open Shame.* It is probable, the Apostle means the Falling from this Duty; because he compares them that fall away to bad Ground, ver. 8. *Which beareth Thorns and Briers, and is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose End is to be burned;* because also, he encourages and commends the Hebrews in and for the Duty, ver. 9, &c. But beloved we are persuaded better Things of you, and Things that accompany Salvation though we thus speak; for God is not unrighteous, to forget your Work and Labour of Love, which ye have shewed towards his Name, in that ye have ministered to the Saints and do minister; and we desire, that every one of you do shew the same Diligence, to the full Assurance of Hope unto the End. Therefore the falling away, and the Crucifying the Son of God afresh (which would make the Condition of People sad and desperate) was the falling from the Love and good Duty which they owed to others, which Christ came to teach, and died to confirm the Truth and Acceptableness, and Necessity of it.

So again, Heb. x. 23, 24. *Let us hold fast the Profession of our Faith without wavering (for he is faithful that promised) and let us consider one another to provoke unto Love, and to good Works.* Ver. 26, &c. For if we sin wilfully after we have received the Knowledge of the Truth (or if we contrary to the Love and good Works, which our Faith and Profession obliges us unto,) then there remaineth no more Sacrifice for Sins; but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment and fiery Indignation, which shall devour the Adversaries. He that despised Moses Law, died without Mercy under two or three Witnesses; of how much sorer Punishment, suppose ye, shall he be though worthy, who hath trodden under Foot the Son of God, and hath counted the Blood of the Covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy Thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace. For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompence saith the Lord; and again the Lord shall judge his People. It is a fearful Thing

64 *Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, Chap. 8.*

Thing to fall into the Hands of the living God So very sad and grievous will the Case of those People be, who have no Mind and Conscience for Love and good Works, and to do to others, as they would themselves be done unto.

Most terrible Threatnings to such unrighteous People are frequent in the Gospel. Math. vii. 19. Every Tree that bringeth not forth good Fruit is hewen down, and cast into the Fire. Math. xviii. 34, 35. The Lord of the unmerciful Servant delivered him to the Tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him; so likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your Hearts forgive not every one his Brother their Trespases. Math. xxiv. 48. &c. The Lord of that evil Servant, that shall begin to smite his Fellow-Servants, and to eat and drink with the Drunken; shall come in a Day when he looketh not for him, and in an Hour that he is not aware of; and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his Portion with Hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth. Luke vi. 24, 25. Wo unto you that are rich; for ye have received your Consolation. Wo unto you that are full, for ye shall hunger. Wo unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep. The Reason of that too seems to be implied in the following Exhortations, and to be this Reason, because they did not do the good, which they might and should have done. Luke xvii. 1, and 2. It is impossible but that Offences will come (or unrighteous Doings to others will be done) but wo unto him through whom they come; it were better for him, that a Millstone were hanged about his Neck, and he cast into the Sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones; or than, that he should by Wrong or by Iniquity, hurt or aggrieve the meanest good Person. Rom. i. 18. The Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men, who hold the Truth in Unrighteousness. Rom. ii. 6, &c. God will render to every Man, according to his Deeds; to them that are contentious, and do not obey the Truth, but obey Unrighteousness, Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish, upon every Soul of Man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile. 1 Thess. iv. 6. Let no Man go beyond and defraud his Brother in any Matter; because the Lord is the Avenger of all such. 2 Thess. i. 7, &c. The

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Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels, in flaming Fire take my Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; (who shall be punished with everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power. He will say to the Unrighteous, *Matth. xxv. 41.* Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels; for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no Meat, &c. *Jam. ii. 13.* He shall have Judgment without Mercy, that hath showed no Mercy.

These Threatnings speak greater Punishment, than the Threatning speaks to him, that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost. Christ says, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this World, nor neither in the World to come; he does not say expressly, that it shall be greater or lesser. But these Threatnings speak, Indignation, Wrath, Vengeance, everlasting Fire, Tribulation and Anguish; they speak the forest Punishment, and the greatest Measure of Pain and Misery that Words can express.

They are denounced more especially for Injustice and Iniquity, against bad People, and against unrighteous, or not good People; against those that do hurt to others, and against those that do not do the good they should do; for they are denounced against them, who hold the Truth in Unrighteousness, who know not God, and obey not the Gospel, who offend, who forgive not, who show no Mercy; or in one Word, they denounce Fire to the Tree that brings not forth good Fruit.

If then we do not do that which is right and good to others, we shall be liable to those Threatnings; we shall be looked upon to have despised and reproached, and blasphemed the Holy Ghost; and to have troden under Foot, and shamed and crucified the Son of God. That is in other Words, we shall be found to have slighted and neglected Love and Mercy, and good Duty to others; to be destitute of it; to be averse from it, and even to hate it; to reject the gracious Mercy and Life, that is offered to us upon it; to be disobedient to God, to Christ, to the Holy Ghost; to be Workers of Iniquity and evil Doers; against the greatest Obligations to good Duty, that could be laid upon us, and

66 *Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost,* Chap. 8.

therefore we shall be thought to be unworthy and unfit to live

Few Persons do much suspect, that they have committed the unpardonable Sin against the Holy Ghost, and are almost ready to despair upon it. But too many Persons are presumptuous and secure, and do make little Doubt or Question of their own Salvation, or perhaps are confident in themselves of it, and cannot believe of thinking any other, but they shall be saved; and yet they live wholly to themselves, or to no Body's Good in a Manner but to their own. Such Persons are under those certain and heavy Threatning; and if they are not amended, and made more righteous and good, there will be no Hope, no Help for them (at least their appears none) but they must be condemned to die, and utterly to perish; however safe now at present they think themselves to be.

But let us take good Care and Heed, that we do the Thing that is just and right, and good to others, the Thing that we would have done unto ourselves; let it be our great Desire and Request to God, that he would make in us a prevalent and lasting Sense of the Duty, and a Mind and Conscience for it; that so we may make it our great Work and Duty; and may be mindful of it before all Things else, and may deny ourselves for it; and may be constant and faithful in it; and there will be some Hope, that at length when we depart from hence, we may through his Mercy, and the Redemption of Jesus Christ, be permitted and suffered to live.

CHAP.

C H A P. IX.

Love and Goodness to others, is the Mind and Temper of the Holy Angels.

THE Holy Angels are the highest Order of reasonable Creatures, above the Souls of good Men deceased, called *Heb. xii. 23. The Spirits of just Men made perfect*; they are spiritual Substances, and have a great Measure of spiritual Properties; they have a sagacious, discerning, penetrating Mind, furnished with a large and comprehensive Knowledge; they have a vigorous, active, mighty Power; they have Freedom and Liberty in themselves, to direct, to excite, or to restrain their Motions, to do, or to forbear to do that which they see fit, or not fit to be done.

They have a gracious Temper of Mind and Spirit; and this it is more than all their other Properties, that makes them Angels of Heaven, and beloved of God; it makes them to be loving and good amongst themselves, and to others inferiour to them; to love Goodness and Righteousness, and People who have an Heart and Conscience for it; to dislike Iniquity and the Workers of it, and be as it were aggrieved at it when it is done; it makes to love and adore God, for his free and abundant Grace and Goodness communicated to the whole Creation; to bless and thank him for his Goodness to themselves, for his giving them their Beings, and their high and excellent Perfections of Nature; and especially to bless and thank him, for making them like unto himself, for endowing them with a gracious, loving Mind and Spirit: This Mind and Spirit they esteem and value above their Dignity, above their natural Perfections, and even above their Being; if Angels could be mortal, they would chuse rather to die and cease to be, than

than not to be such as they are, or than not to be loving and good.

The Titles that are given to them, are Intimations of this Mind and Temper; they are called Holy Angels, *Math. xxv. 31. Mark viii. 38* This Title intimates their Integrity and Perfection in Grace and Love; that as they are loving and good, so they are inwardly intirely and wholly so; they have not any Disposition in them to the least Iniquity, but an innate Aversion from it; all the Powers of their Nature incline them to Goodness, and imploy them about it, and delight them in it.

They are called the elect Angels, *1 Tim. v. 21*. This Title intimates, that God is well pleased with them, and sees in them no Matter for Dislike, no Faulty defect in their Love and Goodness. They seem to be called the Sons of God, *Job i. 6. and xxxviii. 7*. This Title intimates, that they have the same Nature and Temper, the same Love and Goodness in them, as God has in himself.

Two or three Instances of their Goodness to Men were these. By Order and Leave one or more of them sent back *Hagar*, and bid her to submit herself to her Mistress, *Gen. xvi. 9*. One or more of them attended upon *Jacob* in his Travels, and helped him through the Treoubles he met with, and delivered him from the Dangers he feared; so he seems to believe and confess *Gen. xlviii. 16. The Angel which redeemed me from Evil, bless the Lads*. One or more of them saved *Lot* from the Destruction of *Sodom*, *Gen. xix. 15*. The three Men from the Fire in the burning Furnace, *Dan. iii. 25. Daniel* from the Lions, *Dan. iii. 22*. *St. Peter* from the Hand of *Herod*, *Acts xii. 11*. And probably saved *St. Paul* and his Company from perishing in a dismal Tempest on the Sea, *Acts xxvii. 23, 24. Lazarus*, *Luke xvi. 20. Was very poor and full of sores, and continued so*; but he was innocent, faithful, just, patient, self-denying; he held and kept his Righteousness under his Poverty and Misery, and did not seek or desire to ease himself by unjust and evil Doings; his Righteousness was so much the greater, as his Hardship and Suffering was more grievous than ordinary;

ordinary ; the Holy Angels loved him for it ; and when he died, they took him into their Company, and under their Care and Protection, and conducted him unto the Place of Ease and Rest. Luke xvi. 22. *The Beggar died, and was carried by the Angels into Abraham's Bosom.*

The Prophets foretold and spoke of the Judgment and Justice that is the Righteousness and Goodness, which the Lord Jesus Christ, when he should come down from Heaven, would convert People unto, and would enable them with Patience and Self denial to main and increase against the Persecutions and Afflictions, and against the enticing Temptations of Sense and the World. It did rejoice the Holy Angels to consider it. 1 Pet. i. 12. *Which Things the Angels desire to look into.* And no sooner was Christ born, but they discovered their Joy to the Shepherds, and gave Thanks to God, and proclaimed the Peace and Love which Christ would procure and settle amongst People. Luke ii. 13, 14. *Suddenly there was with the Angel, a Multitude of the heavenly Host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the Highest, and on Earth peace, good Will towards Men.*

Christ affirms, Luke xv. 10. *I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the Angels of God, over one Sinner that repenteth.* Repentance is Conversion to Righteousness and Goodness. The Man, being a Sinner, lives to his own Satisfaction ; being converted he lives to the Good of others, and is more desirous to do that which is right and good to them, than he is to have his own Mind and will be doing it more as he is enabled. The Angel of God love Righteousness, and are pleased to see that it is, and will be increased by his Repentance and Conversion ; therefore they rejoice at it.

Christ warns and declares, Math. xviii. 10. *Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones ; for I say unto you, that in Heaven their Angels do always behold the Face of my Father which is in Heaven.* This may suggest to us, that the Angels in Heaven do compassionate and pity helpless innocent Persons, and are concerned for their Safety and Welfare, and are grieved if they
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see them to suffer, and are ready to represent their Case and to plead their Innocency before God, and to complain to him of those, who do despise and offend them, or who use them unjustly and hardly. And to do these Things for little ones, for poor, low, weak, innocent Persons, is the Effect and Property of a tender, merciful, loving Mind.

The Angel refused to accept of worship from St. John, and said, *Revel. xix. 10. and xxii. 9. See thou do it not; I am thy Fellow-Servant, and of thy Brethren that have the Testimony of Jesus, worship God* Which may seem, as if the Angel had said to this Purpose, — Although I am of an higher Order in Nature, and have greater Powers and Perfections than you have; yet I have not an higher Mind in me. Adoration or Worship is a Sign of Obedience as well as of Respect, owing to the Person that is adored or worshipped; it is due to God, and I will not have it paid to me; it is better to me to give than to receive; to serve others, than to require or receive Worship or Service from them, and to be as a Lord over them; I have no such haughty Spirit in me. I am Servant to the same gracious Lord, and in the same Work of Righteousness for the Good of others, as you and your Brethren, the Apostles and true Christian People are, I do heartily desire and endeavour to further that Work; my Mind and Nature as well as the Command of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ perswades and prompts me to it: I delight in it, and love it; I encourage others to maintain and advance it; I am thy Fellow Servant in it — People then, who are truly and heartily, loving, merciful and good to others, have the Nature and Temper of the Holy Angels in them; and will be taken into their Company to enjoy the Happiness of Heaven with them.

Christ teaches to pray, *Matth. vi. 10. Thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven*; or that we may do the Will of God, that which is right and good to others, as the Angels in Heaven do it; which may give us to believe, that the Angels do it, faithfully, effectually, constantly, from a gracious, righteous Mind and Temper, from a Love to Goodness.

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The Apostle teaches, that the Will of God is that which is right and good to others. He exhorts, Rom. xii. 2. *Be not conformed to this World, but be transformed, by the Renewing of your Mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect Will of God* And then in his following Discourse, as if he had said, he intended to declare and shew what that Will of God is, he mentions and exhorts unto Duties of Righteousness and Goodness, and dissuades from Things that are contrary thereto, and are hurtful to others, or do tend to their Hurt. Ver. 3. *That we think not of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, but soberly; for we are Members one of another.* Ver. 6. *That we be diligent in the Duties of our Place and Office.* Ver. 9, &c. *That we love without Dissimulation, and abhors that which is evil, and I leave to that which is good, and be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly Love, in Honour preferring one another, that we be not slothful in Business.* Ver. 13. *That we distribute to the Necessity of the Saints, and be given to Hospitality, that we bless and curse not.* Ver 16. *That we be of the same Mind one towards another, and mind not high Things, but condescend to Men of low Estate, that we be not wise in our own Conceits.* Ver. 17. *That we recompense to Man Evil for Evil, that we provide Things honest in the Sight of all Men, and live peaceably with all Men.* Ver. 21. *That we be not overcome of Evil, but overcome Evil with Good.* Rom. xiii. 1, &c. *That we be subject to the higher Powers for Conscience and Duty sake.* Ver. 7, &c. *That we render to all their Dues, and owe no Man any Thing but to love one another; for, ver. 10. Love is the Fulfilling of the Law.* Ver. 14. *That we put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no Provision for the Flesh to fulfil the Lusts thereof.* Rom. xiv. 3, &c. *That we judge not, that we despise not, for the Use or Disuse of indifferent Things, as of Meats or Days.* For ver. 17. *The Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink, but Righteousness and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost; for he that in these Things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of Men.* Rom. xv. 2. *That we every one of us please his Neighbour for good to Edification.*

These righteous Duties to others the Apostle exhorts unto, as being the good and acceptable, and perfect Will of God; and he prays, that God would make us all hearty, conscientious and like unto Christ in them; and to know and believe to be the great Work and Duty, whereby we must serve, and please, and glorify God. Rom. xv. 5, 6 *Now the God of Patience and Consolation grant you to be like minded one towards another according to Christ Jesus; that ye may with one Mind and one Mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Therefore, when we pray, as our Lord has taught us, *Math. vi. 10 Thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.* According to the Explication of the Will of God, which the Apostle gives us, *Rom. xii. &c.* We ought to desire and pray, that we may be truly and heartily, loving, merciful, and good to others, as the Angels in Heaven are.

CHAP. X.

Malice, which is contrary to Love and Goodness, is the Mind and Temper of the evil Angels.

THE evil Angels are Spirits, and have the Nature and Properties of Spirits in them; they have much natural Knowledge, and a quick subtil Mind; they have a great and vigorous Power, and are able to do great Things with weak Means and Helps; they are free Agents, and have a Principle of Self-motion in them, to determine their own Actions, and to do what they will themselves; they made a bad Use of their Freedom and Power, and did Things that were to the Hurt, and not to the Good of others, and God did justice upon them for it. 2 Pet. ii. 4. *He spared not the Angels that sinned, but cast them down to Hell, and delivered them into Chains of Darkness to be reserved unto Judgment.*

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It is probable, that this did incage and inflame them with extream and perfect Malice, and made them wholly and resolutely bent, to do all the worst Mischief, which their Wit and Power can help them to do; as it were in Spight against God, and in Revenge upon him, for putting them down from Heaven, and from their Happiness; like some haughty Men, who being punished for their injurious evil Doings, do set their Mind and Heart to work upon Revenge, and further Mischief; and care not for the sorer Punishment which they must expect and suffer for it.

They cannot hurt God himself directly; their Desire and Endeavour is to work him some Offence and Displeasure; and for that Purpose, they tempt, they intice or press People to transgress and act against his Command, or to omit it, and leave it undone; to do the Sin, or to do the Iniquity, which he forbids and dislikes, and would not have done. That any Persons do so, and continue to do so, it is a kind of Hurt or Loss to God, at least, it is not pleasing to him; for the good, which he would have done that is not done; but the Evil, which he would not have done, that is done; his Mind and Intention is, as it were, disappointed; his Grace and Work in those People is destroyed and lost.

They do present Mischief to People when they can do it, and are not with-held from it; that they may trouble and hurt them, and destroy the Comforts which God gives them; that they may hinder, or may diminish the Content and Satisfaction, which God might have in seeing them to rejoice and be happy by his Blessing and Goodness; and especially the Content and Satisfaction, which he might have, in seeing them to make a righteous Use of his Blessings, to the Help and Comfort of others his good People.

Some of the Doings of the evil Angels w^ere these, *Gen. iii.* They tempted our first Parents to eat of the forbidden Fruit, and inticed and drew them into an helpless Condition of Sin and Misery. *Exod. vii. &c.* They did some Wonders, or seemed to do them by the Magicians, before *Pharaoh*, and made him the more obstinate, in holding the People of *Israel* under Bondage, and in rejecting the Command and Messag^e of
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God by *Moses*; until the Country of *Egypt* was wasted by Judgments, and the First-born died by the Plague, and the Army was drowned in the Sea, *1 Kings* xxi. They inspired and prompted *Ahab's* Prophets, about four hundred Men of them, to foretel and promise to him, as from the Lord, that he should gain *Ramath* in *Giliad*, and he was slain in the Attempt, *1 Chron.* xxi. They provoked *David* to number *Israel*, and God was displeased at it, and sent the Pestilence upon *Israel*, and there fell of *Israel* seventy thousand Men, *Job* i. &c. They dealt cruelly with *Job* when they had him in their Hands; they destroyed his Goods, killed his Cattle, his Servants, his Children, infected his Body, afflicted his Mind, bereaved him of his Health, Ease, and Comfort.

They did sorely torment and disable those Persons mentioned in the Gospel, in whom they had got Possession. They perswaded *Judas* to betray Christ, *John* xiii. 2. And when he had done it, to hang himself, *Math.* xxvii. 5. They perswaded *Ananias* and his Wife, to keep back from the Apostles, a Part of the Price of the Land which they sold; and at *St. Peter's* Reproof for it, they both presently gave up the Ghost, *Acts* v. They take away the Word out of the Hearts of some that hear, lest they should believe, and be saved, *Luke* viii. 12. They sow Tares among the Wheat, *Math.* xiii. 25. Or with a Pretence and Shew of Truth and Holiness, they instil and work unrighteous Opinions and false Doctrines into People; that from thence some Iniquity may the more easily be done and allowed, and the Word of God may have the less good Fruit in them. They transform themselves, and would seem to be Angels of Light, *2 Cor.* xi. 14. They blind the Minds of them which believe not, *2 Cor.* iv. 4. They work in the Children of Disobedience, *Ephes.* ii. 2. And their working is, with all Deceivableness of Unrighteousness, *2 Thess.* ii. 10. They walk about seeking whom they may devour, *1 Pet.* v. 8. These Things or most of them are spoken particularly of the Devil; and they may be understood as spoken of his Angels also; for they are all of them fallen away from Grace and Goodness, and are under the Rejection and Condemnation

tion of God, and have the same malicious Mind in them as the Devil is, and has; they are all of them bent upon Sin and Destruction to get it done.

The evil Angels brought in, and settled, a wicked Idolatry amongst the Heathen; they perswaded them to worship false and feigned Gods, to trust in them, and to expect and hope for the Conveniences of Life from them; they perswaded People to think, that sensual lewd and bloody Wickednesses were pleasing to their Gods. Hence it was, that luxurious Feasting, and riotous rude Mirth and Pastime, was the common Way of the Heathen at their Sacrifices; and that Whoredom and Murder were sometimes then committed, and were even allowed, and thought to be lawful and good. 1 Pet. iv. 3. *The Will of the Gentiles, or the Way of the Heathen, is said to have been, in Lasciviousness, Lusts, Excess of Wine, Revellings, Banquettings, and abominable Idolatries.* At the Worship of the Calf, Exod xxxii. 6. *They offered Burnt-Offerings and brought Peace-Offerings, and the People sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.* And when Moses came nigh, ver. 18, & 19. *He heard the Singing, and saw the Calf, and the Dancing* Numb. xxv. 1. *The People began to commit Whoredom with the Daughters of Moab, and they called the People unto the Sacrifices of their Gods, and the People did eat and bowed down to their Gods.*

God commanded, that the Children of Israel should bring their Sacrifices to the Door of the Tabernacle; and that the Priest should sprinkle the Blood upon his Altar; that they might shew and make it to appear, that they did not sacrifice to strange Gods. He said, Levit. xvii. 7. *They shall no more offer their Sacrifices unto Devils, after whom they have gone a Whoring.* The Apostle says, 1 Cor. x. 20. *The Things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to Devils, and not to God.* The Psalmist says, Psal cvi. 37, 38. *Yea, they sacrificed their Sons and their Daughters unto Devils, and shed innocent Blood, even the Blood of their Sons and of their Daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the Idols of Canaan, and the Land was polluted with Blood.* God forbid, that the Way of the Heathen, in the Worship of their Gods, should be inquired after to be followed, Dent. xii. 31.

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For every Abomination to the Lord, which he hateth they have done unto their Gods; for even their Sons and their Daughters, they have burnt in the Fire to their Gods. 2 Kings xvii. 31. The Sepharvites burnt their Children in Fire to their Gods. The evil Angels inticed and drew the ignorant Heathen to do these heinous Wickednesses, and deluded them to think, that they were a Service, both acceptable to their Gods, and profitable to themselves; that their Gods liked the better of them, and were the more inclined and ready to help them for such Doings, being done as a Worship and Service to them.

It hath been their earnest Intent and Endeavour all along from our first Parents, by Suggestions and Instigations, and inward Motions, and secret Workings from outward Things, or by other Perswasions or Provocations, to bring People to Sin, and to Death, and they have had much Success in it; they have tempted and prevail'd with some People to commit deadly Wickedness; they have tempted and prevail'd with much more People to become Workers of Iniquity; to be careless and negligent of the good and righteous Duty which they owed to others; to think that it was enough, if they did not do actual Hurt and Wrong to them; to seek their worldly Profits and Pleasures, the Devices and Desires of their Hearts; and yet to think that they kept the Commands of God, and were his good Servants, and his accepted People. They have perswaded them to hold on in this Iniquity and Presumption, until the Day of Grace was past with them, and the Judgment and Wrath of God fell unexpectedly upon them; and they found when it was too late, that they had been mistaken, and that the subtil malicious Angels had deceived them, and had seduced them to their utter and irreparable Undoing.

The evil Angels know, that if we have not in us a good Sense of the Duty which we ought to do to others, we shall not do well in it, and that then God will not be pleased with us, whatever else we do. Therefore, they will be tempting and inticing us from it, if they be not tempting and inticing us to gross Wickedness; they will use Means to weaken and
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dead the Sense of the Duty, and to work in us a low Opinion, and a kind of Contempt of it, and to stir up other Desires against which may incline us to neglect it, or to be defective and faulty in it; they may encourage us, or at least they may allow us, and let us alone to be Quakers, or Anabaptists, or Presbyterians, or Church-People, or to be any Thing that we like to be, but just and righteous, and good to others; if they can tempt us to be unjust, or to be unrighteous, and to continue so, then whatever we may profess or may hope, they know that they shall gain their Ends, and have their Mind; for then God shall be offended, and we shall be condemned, and they shall, as it were, laugh at it, and rejoice to see that they have prevailed against God; and have seduced us from his Grace and Goodness, to become unrighteous and also miserable, to become accursed Devils like themselves, and to prevent the Iniquity and the Destruction, which they would tempt and bring us unto; we must pray heartily to God for help, that we may be faithful and constant, and may do well in our Duty to others.

C H A P. XI.

Pride, Confidence, Unrighteousness to others, was the Sin or Sins, by which the evil Angels fell.

TH E fallen Angels were created in some Degree righteous, as the Holy Angels were; and had an innate Sense and Knowledge to perceive, that it was a Thing fit and reasonable, and good in itself, that it was the Mind of God, and their Duty, viz. that they should be innocent and just, true and faithful, loving, merciful, and good to their Fellow Creatures. They were made with great Vigour and other Abilities, and were naturally sprightly and lively, restless from
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Action, and unwearied in it; it seemed to them, to add Vigour and Strength to their Powers, and Life to their Spirit to be doing. It may seem to be not altogether unlikely, that as they perceived that they could do Actions, which would be to the Hurt of others, and were not allowed to be done, so their Vigour and Confidence sometimes prompted and animated them thereto.

And having done such an Action, they found, that although it was against their Duty, and hurtful to some others; yet that it exercised their Powers, and that it was somewhat pleasing to themselves, to be employed about it, and to get it done; if it was not morally good and righteous yet it was naturally good; for there was more Subtilty and Cunning, and more Confidence and Courage, required to the Doing of an unjust or deceitful, or mischievous and bad Action, than was required to the Doing of an innocent true and good Action. And as for God, he had given them Power and Freedom for it, which was a Kind of Concession and Grant to them, to do it if they would; and therefore it could not be much displeasing to him; or if it did displease him, they had more Spirit in them, than to be much afraid of him, or of what he might and would do to them. Surely the sinning Angels were more knowing than to be ruled by such false and shallow Reasonings as these, if they had considered them.

But however it was they sinned freely, of their own Mind and Will, as if they had had some Reason, besides their natural Activity, to justify or excuse it; and by sinning so, and continuing to sin so, they sinned away and lost that Sense or Righteousness and Goodness, and that Disposition for it, which God had created them with; and that Sense and Disposition being lost, they naturally, and in Course of Things became selfish, wilful, confident, lawless, and made not the Good of others, nor the Will of God, but their own Will, the Aim and End of their Doings; and accounted an Action to be right, or to be wrong, not as it did good, or did evil to others; but as it was suitable,

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or not suitable to their own Mind, and as they themselves liked or disliked it.

Thus it is with us, by omitting and neglecting, the good and righteous Duty that we ought to do to others we weaken and dead the Sense of it, and do become disposed quietly and securely, not only to be still neglecting it, but also to act even against it, and to do Iniquity, if we are tempted or provoked to do it, and do think that we can do it with present Safety. It was with the Angels as Christ says it will be with People, Math. xxv. 29. *Unto every one that bath, shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that bath not, shall be taken away, even that which he bath.* The Angels that took care of righteous Duty, had the Sense of it mightily increased and firmly settled in them, and had the Favour and Grace of God continued to them, and did become exceeding righteous, love and good; and the Angels that neglected and slighted righteous Duty, suppressed or lost the Sense of it, and had the Grace of God taken from them, and then they could freely without Sense of Sin or Self-Reproof do any Iniquity, and even any Mischief which they had a Mind to do.

We know not the Way of Converse amongst Angels, or how they act to, and upon one another; but without doubt they do or can act it, with more Force and to a greater Perception than we can amongst ourselves. It is probable, that the sinning Angels shewed themselves and carried it so, to some of the good Angels, as bad Persons sometimes shew themselves and carry it to others, and that they did Things to them that were not right and good; Things which we may conceive to be not improper for active free Agents to do, who who have little or no Regard to any Thing but their own Mind, and to please themselves.

It is somewhat probable, that the sinning Angels failed and disappointed, or deceived or inticed and drew into Hurt or Danger some of the good Angels, who trusted to them and expected Truth and Faithfulness from them, and that they were pleased and rejoiced at it, when they had deceived or mischieved them, and derided and mocked at them, for their Ignorance and Weakness,

Weakness, or for their Innocency and Simplicity; or that they insulted over some of them, and took it upon to be as Masters and Rulers over them, to exact Submission and Compliance from them, and to afflict and hurt them, if they did not submit and comply; or that they were impatient of Displeasure, and implacable to some that did not please them, and were furious and cruel upon them for it; or that they were stubborn and unruly, and disobedient to their Superiors; or that they were conceited and scornful, and shewed Disrespect and Contempt to their Betters; or that they were unmerciful to some of them, and were unaffected and unmoved at their Wants and Sufferings, and did not care to concern and imploy themselves for their Help and Good; as to supply the Needy, to instruct the Ignorant, to warn and advise the Rash and Heady, to encourage assist and strengthen the Weak, to ease the Burdened, to rescue and deliver the Oppressed, to comfort the Sorrowful, to relieve the Afflicted, or otherwise to help them as the Case and Trouble wanted help, and as they might and would have helped them, if they had had a Love for Goodness in them. It is somewhat probable, that the sinning Angels did unto some of the good Angels Things that were in the Effects of them such as these, or that were evil and unrighteous in the Nature of them.

By such Doings they disobeyed the Order, and brake the Law, and disturbed the Peace of Heaven; they did Hurt to some of the good Angels, and caused Grief to some others of them, whom they did not actually hurt; who could not but be somewhat concerned and troubled to see that Iniquity should be done amongst them, and that any in their Company should degenerate, and fall away from Love and Goodness, so as to have a Mind and to be able, to be unjust or to be unmerciful to their Brethren.

God was offended to see, that any of his Holy Angels should be misused, or to see that the Help and Good which they wanted should be denied, and withheld from them. God can as easily bear with an Offence done against himself, or with the Neglect of the Duty and Worship, that ought to be performed unto him,

him, as he can bear with any Hurt done to his Saints and People; or with the Neglect and Omission of the Duty and Good that ought to be done unto them; no common Impiety or Sin is so displeasing and provoking to him, as is the Disobedience unto his good and righteous Law.

The sinning Angels could not hurt God himself, but they could, and probably did, hurt some of the good Angels; or they did refuse or neglect to do the Good to them, which they might and should have done; they could and did disobey and break his righteous Law. And God made them Examples of his Displeasure at Iniquity and Injustice to others; he displaced them from the State, that he had set them in; he put them away from his Presence; he expelled them out of his Kingdom; he cast them down from Heaven, and intends farther to punish them.

As God did above in Heaven to the sinning Angels, so Men do here below to Malefactors. If a Man does not make actual Rebellion against the King, but does Mischief to the lowest Subject; the Judge considers it, as an Hurt done unto the King himself, and as a Breach of the King's Peace and good Government, and condemns the Malefactor, that the innocent People may be quiet and safe from him, and from the Mischief, which he has shewed that he can do. Or if a Servant be not disobedient or false to the Master, but is haughty and contentious, and misuses any of the Servants; the Master looks upon it as a Wrong to himself, and puts him away, that the Servants may the more contentedly and chearfully do their proper Services, and carry on his Work the Hurt which the sinning Angels did, probably they did it unto some of the good Angels, and did not intend it against God, or design any Hurt or Offence to him by it; but God took it as done unto himself, and took Vengeance upon them for it.

That a selfish bad Mind and Doings towards others, or the Want of Love and Goodness to them, was the Sin by which the Angels fell, seems to be taught in the Gospel. It is said of them, Jude 6. *That they kept not their first Estate, but left their own Habitation.* Whereby we may conceive, that they did not keep themselves such as

God had made them, and such as were fit to be in his Family, in which he had placed them, and intended them to be; he made and fitted them to do that which was right and good to others, and they fitted and disposed themselves to do Iniquity to them. And he would not suffer them to inhabit with his holy Angels, to be doing hurt to those who could not, who had it not in them to do hurt, whose Mind and Temper, and delight was Love and Goodness. And for their unrighteous Mind and Doings, Jude 6. *He hath reserved them in everlasting Chains under Darkness unto the Judgment of the great Day.* 2 Pet. ii. 4. *He spared not the Angels that sinned, but cast them down to Hell.*

It is said of the Devil, John viii. 44. *That he abode not in the Truth, because there no Truth in him.* By Truth we may understand Goodness to others; it is set there against Murder and Lying, or against Mischief and Deceit; and elsewhere Truth is contrary to Malice and Wickedness, 1 Cor. v. 8. It is contrary to Iniquity, 1 Cor. xiii. 6. It is contrary to bitter Envyng and Strife, Jam. iii. 14. The doing Truth is the contrary to doing Evil, Job iii. 20, 21. Not to obey the Truth, but to obey Unrighteousness, Rom. ii. 8. And not to believe the Truth, but have Pleasure in Unrighteousness, 2 Theff. ii. 12. Is the same Thing, and signifies the doing not good, but evil to others.

In the *Pfams*, and elsewhere, Truth is sometimes joined with Mercy, or loving Kindness, or Judgment, or Justice, and seems to speak and mean the doing that which is right and good to others, as those Words do. This perhaps is the principal Signification of Truth which the Scriptures give, and it may give light to the above cited Text, John viii. 44. *Which says, that the Devil abode not in the Truth, and has no Truth in him.* We may conceive it as intended and meant thereby, that he did not continue as God had made him, righteous, loving and good to his Fellow-Creatures, to do unto them as he ought to have done; he did not like it well to be ruled and restrained by Duty, but to be unconfined and lawless and at his own Liberty, to omit the Good that he ought to do, and to do the Evil that he ought not to do, as he pleased himself. God
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cast him out of Heaven, and it made him still worse, more earnestly set against Goodness, and more fully bent and resolved upon Mischief, that he may get what revenge he can upon God for it. He is become quite destitute and void of Love and Mercy, and Goodness, or as it is before expressed, he has no Truth in him.

The Apostle directed and counselled *Timothy* not to make Choice of a Novice for a Bishop or a Deacon, 1 Tim. iii. 6. *Left being lifted up with Pride he fall into the Condemnation of the Devil.* Pride is a Mind and Disposition, that sets Men and that sets Angels too above or against others, and inclines and makes them to be insulting and masterly over them; or to be self-willed and obstinate against them; or to be uncompassionate and hard-hearted towards them; more ready as Occasion is to hurt and to do evil, than to help and to do good to them; not to care what they do unto them, or what they otherwise suffer. Such as this was the Mind and Carriage of the Devil, and of the sinning Angels towards the good Angels their Fellow-Creatures; they were proud and haughty, pitiless and unkind, and hard, and sometimes malicious and mischievous towards them, and it was the Sin, by which they fell away from God and from Goodness, for which they were condemned to Hell.

Therefore whither we are Church-People or Dissenters, or not the one nor the other, and whither we are Masters or Labourers; these of us who are selfish, self-ended, self-willed, who care for none but ourselves, and our near Friends; who will be sure to see, that we have the Gain or the Better of others, and not they of us; who like it better to be Masters, than we do to be Servants; to have others to serve us, and to submit and comply to us, and not we to them; who have no more Humanity, Equity, or Justice for others, than what we are forced to have for our own Quiet, Safety, Credit, Profit, or other Advantage; those of us, I say, may consider how near akin we are to the fallen Angels! How much of their Mind and Spirit is in us! What very Children of the Devil we are! What very Traytors to God and to Christ, and Rebels against his Kingdom, and against the Law of Heaven

and Earth we are! And I pray, that we may be persuaded to consider it, and to lay it to Heart, and to take warning from the fallen Angels; lest we fall into Condemnation as they have done, because we also have no Truth, no hearty Love and Goodness for others in us.

C H A P. XII.

Love and Goodness to others, is the Joy and Happiness of the Saints above in Heaven, or it is a very great Part of it.

THE Love of Goodness to others is a very comfortable Affection or Temper; it makes the Mind easy and satisfied; it gives the rest to the Soul, which Christ promises to those, who take his Yoke upon them, and learn of him, *Math. xi. 29.* It helps People to perceive in themselves, that they are in some measure, such as the Faith and Gospel of Christ intends them to be; and that they have something of the Grace and Spirit, the Love and Goodness of God in them; it almost enheartens them to say, with the Apostle, *1 John iii. 14. We know that we have passed from Death unto Life, because we love the Brethren.* It is a Righteous, Gracious, Affection and Temper; it not only makes People innocent, just, true and faithful; careful not to hurt, and even not to displease others; more disposed to bear and forgive offences, than to requite them: But also it makes them to love good People, as they do themselves, to make their condition as it were their own, to rejoyce at their Welfare, to condole with them, and to be grieved at their Affliction, to be willing and ready to remove the Evils that trouble them, to supply them in their wants, to assist and help them in their Infirmities, to ease them from their Suffering and Sorrow: It makes them to be well pleased and glad, when they do good to them, as true real Friends are when they do so to one another. Perhaps there is not any

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any thing more pleasing and good to the Human Mind and Nature, than is the showing kindness, and the doing pleasure and benefit to those for whom People have an hearty esteem and love. And if it be a Work so very pleasing and good to human People, in this weak and necessitous Life and State; we may believe that it is much more pleasing to the Saints above, who are freed from all infirmities and necessities, well might withhold them from the Work, or might make it to be less easy and pleasing to them.

Heaven is said to be a Kingdom, to be a City, to be an Household or Family; which signifies that it is an Assembly of reasonable Creatures, living together under God their King and Governor. It is Love that makes their Conversation and Neighbourhood to be kind, pleasing and good; it inclines and delights them, to impart and communicate to one another, the Blessings and Benefits which they have from him.

Heaven is likened unto a Dinner, which a King made at the Marriage of his Son, *Math. xxii. 2, &c.* It is the friendly Discourse and Conversation of the Guests, that makes such a Dinner to be a Feast indeed; it does much divert and please them; it is a different and a better pleasure and delight *than Eating and Drinking is.* So probably it is the great and unfeigned Love and Friendship of Angels and Saints, that makes their company to be Heaven to them.

Rom. xiv. 17. The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. The happiness of it does not lie chiefly in solitary private Delights, with which a person may gratifie his own mind, and may comfort himself only with them: But, it lies rather in Community and Society, in a friendly Conversation with others, in expressions of kindness, in communications of Love and Goodness to them. Love and Goodness to others is the great and principal part of Righteousness; it does most especially make People righteous and acceptable to God and Christ, and fit for his Kingdom, and for society and conversation with Saints and Angels.

I Cor. xiii. 8 Charity never faileth, but whether there be Prophecies they shall fail; whether there be Tongues, they shall

shall cease ; whether there be Knowledge it shall vanish away. Love and Goodness to others, and a Mind and Temper for it, will still be the Duty and Grace of People, when they go away from hence, and will remain and be perfected in them in the next Life, whom prophecies and tongues and Knowledge, or teaching, and the Ordinances of Religion, and the means and helps which they have here in the Church for it, will cease and be of no further use to them.

The Apostle rejoiced, for that had made the *Colossians* meet to be partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light, *Col. i. 12.* And by what he said, and prayed and gave thanks for, he dictated to them to perceive and understand, that that meetness or fitness lay in their Faith in Christ Jesus, and in the Love which they had to all the Saints, *ver. 4.* It lay in their being converted to it, and having a Sense of it, and a Mind for it in them, or in their knowing the Grace of God in truth, *ver. 6.* It lay in their being fruitful in every good Work, and increasing in the Sense of it, or in the knowledge of God, and of his Mind and Will for it, *ver. 10.* It lay in their being Strengthened, and Patient, and Long-Suffering, and joyful in it, *ver. 11.* By these expressions the Apostle signifies and teaches, that it was Love and Goodness to others, that did qualify and fit the *Colossians*, and make them meet for the Kingdom and Inheritance of the Saints above.

It is said, *Eph. ii. 8.* *By Grace ye are saved through Faith, and that not of your selves, it is the gift of God, not of Works, lest any Man should boast, &c.* It is likely that the Apostle meant, not principally or only, the Grace that was in God, or the merciful minds and intention of God to save the *Ephesians*; but that he rather meant the Grace that was in them, or the Love and Mercy and Goodness, which they had in them, and shewed to others; they did not obtain that Grace or Love, by their own use of natural means. but it was taught them by the Gospel of Christ, and wrought in them by the Spirit of God. It did convert them from their Sensual and Selfish desires and doings, and from the evil ways of the World, to which they had been addicted and enslaved, and were, as it were, Dead in them, *ver. 1, &c.* or were be-
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come senseless and heartless in human Righteous and good Duty. But God who is rich in Mercy, *ver. 4.* &c. had quickened them, or had as it were, put Life into them; he had inspired them with Grace and Love, and had made in them a sensible and active Mind for the Duty. It was his end and purpose, his mind and desire in sending the Apostle, and in succeeding and blessing his teaching and ministring to them, *viz.* That they might become Righteous, Loving, and good to others, *ver. 10.* They were his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good Works which he had before Ordained, that they should walk in them, they were good works done to others, and not the works or religious services of the Law of *Moses*, or other works of the like Nature, and unto himself, that did make the *Ephesians* well pleasing in his sight, and would procure to them Life and Salvation. It is likely as I said, that the Apostle meant and intended, the Grace, or the Love and Goodness to others, which the *Ephesians* had in them, rather than the gracious mind of God towards them, when he said, *ver. 8.* *by Grace ye are saved through Faith*; and to comfort and encourage them in that Grace and Duty, in Love and Goodness to others: He said, *ver. 19.* *Now therefore ye are no more Strangers and Foreigners, but Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God*, or ye are in some degree, such as the People of Heaven are; ye have the same Heart and mind in you, as the Saints above have in them; it is Love to others, that makes them to be beloved of God, and it is their Glory and Happiness; and you having that Love in you, God owns you for his People, and will receive you unto himself, as he has done them.

It is said, *Eph. iii. 14, 15.* *The whole Family in Heaven and Earth is named of the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* To be named of him is to have his Nature, his Mind and Temper in them; from whence they may be said to be such as he is, the whole Family, and every person of it is such: Christian People here on Earth have the like mind and disposition in them, as the People in Heaven have in them, and as the Father has in him, and are allyed and a kin to them, and to him; they both are the true Children of the Father, and the Brethren
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of the Lord Jesus Christ; they both do partake of the divine Nature, and are righteous loving and good to others, in some degree as the Father is.

It must needs be so, for otherwise they could not properly be named from him; or be truly said to be his Children, or his Servants or his People, nor could they be of his Family: Angels or Men, that have a selfish unrighteous Mind and Temper in them, are as aliens and strangers, not related, not a kin to Him and to his People: They will from thence be doing evil things, hurtful or hard to others, and displeasing and provoking in his sight; they must not be received into his Family, or they must not be permitted to abide and remain in it; it is not allowable and fit, that they should Eat of the Children's Bread, and share in their Blessings, and yet be deceitful and false to them, or exacting of them, or insulting over them, or be otherwise troublesome or grievous, or unkind and hard-hearted to them. Neither God nor Man will suffer any Person to be with him, and to have the benefit and privileges of his House, who is of disagreeing mind and carriage, and does displease him, and disturb the Peace, and hinder the welfare and good of his Family. It cannot then be, that any one should be of the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is not named of him, whose mind and doings are different from his, who is not righteous loving and good to others, for the Father is so.

We may reasonably think, that it is Heaven and Happiness, a great and full satisfaction to the Saints above to perceive and know, that they have a gracious Temper in them, and do approve of, and do delight in righteousness and goodness to others, above all things else; that they have the same Mind and Spirit, the same kind and loving Temper in them, as the Lord Jesus Christ, and as God the Father has in him, and are one with God; as Christ prayed that his People might be. *John xvii. 21. That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.*

It is better to them to perceive and know that they have a gracious Mind and Temper in them, than it is to find, that they have a great Knowledge, Power, Activity, and other Endowments; or, that they are

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easy in their outward condition, and have not the Cares and Labours, the Necessities and Hardships, the Temptations, the Enmity and Discord, and other Sorrow and Miseries, which People here on Earth are afflicted with. For if they had not Mind and Temper in them they would not make a right and good Use of the Enduements and Blessings granted them; and then they could not have true content and happiness in them. It is better to them to perceive and know, that they are one with God, and have the Love of God, that is the Love of Goodness to others in them, than it is to find, that they have the immediate Sight and Presence of God, and do behold something of his Glory and Greatness, and do adore and praise him for it; and can contemplate and consider his mighty Works, his Wisdom, Power and other Perfections, his Mind and Will and Purpose in them, his Way and Means for them; and can with a pleasing Admiration and Reverence, divert themselves with high and mysterious thoughts about them.

For if that they had not that Love in them, they would not heartily Love him, and he would not have an hearty esteem for them; and then if we suppose that they should be suffered to be near him, yet the Sight and presence of him would be the less comfortable to them; but they having that Love in them, they Love him above all, for he far excels the whole Heaven in goodness; and they know and are certain from it, that he Loves them as he does himself; and for the same reason, or because they have the same Mind and Love in them, as he has in himself.

They who are righteous, merciful, and good to others, have the same Mind as the blessed Angels and Saints in Heaven have; and there is much hope and promise, that they will be taken in amongst them. The Temptations and Troubles, which they meet with in the Duty, and do bear with patience and self-denial are proofs, that they are sincere in it, and that their Minds is set much more upon it, than it is upon their own present desires, they help to show that they have increased and double the Talent, or the natural Sense of it, which their Lord committed to their Trust and Care, to be used and managed

prayed for him, and for the comfort and good of others, and he will accept their service and patience and self-denial, and will reward them for it. He will say to every one of them, as it is *Math. xxv. 21, 23. Well done thou Good and Faithful Servant. thou hast been Faithful over a few Things, I will make the Ruler over many Things; enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.*

C H A P. XIII.

Love and Goodness to others, was the Faith, that was imputed to Abraham for Righteousness.

ABRAMAM believed, that righteous and good Duty to others was more necessary and more pleasing in the Sight of God, than any other Duty was; and accordingly his mind was set upon it, his desire and Cure was to approve himself to God in it. Some things recorded of him shews that this was his Belief and Mind; he was conscientious hearty and effectual in the Duty, and did hope, that therefore God would be Gracious and Merciful to him.

When he went from *Haran* to go unto *Canaan*, he took with him all the Souls that they had gotten, *Gen. xii. 5.* He took with him, the weak and useless Persons as well as others. even those whom he must provide for, and who would be more a Trouble and Hindrance than an help to him, in a long and dangerous Journey, and in a strange and uncertain Country; his good Nature, his human Sense, his righteous Mind, did not suffer him to leave one of them behind him at *Haran* to be in want and misery.

Sarah could not bear it, that her Son *Isaac* should be Mocked; and wherefore she said unto *Abraham*, cast out this bond Woman and her Son, and the thing was very grievous in *Abraham's* Sight, because of his Son, *Gen. xxi. 9, 10, 11.* and it was against his Mind and Nature to cast them out, and expose them to Hardship; he could not be brought to do it, no not by the great Love he had for *Sarah*, until God had forbidden him to hearken unto her Vice, (for in *Isaac* shall thy Seed be called) and

had promised to take care of the Lad, and to make a Nation of him, because he was his Son, ver. 12, 13.

Abraham's Servants and Lot's Servants strove together; and he forbore to use the Authority of a Father or a Master, to command what he would have done; he advised Lot as a Friend, or rather intreated him, as if Lot had been his Superiour, to do what he thought might be best for him; he was contented to be the Sufferer for Peace sake, if one of them must suffer. Gen. xiii. 7, 8, 9. Abraham said unto Lot, let there be no Strife. I pray thee, between thee and me, and between my Herdsmen and thy Herdsmen, for we be Brethren; is not the whole Land before thee? Separate thy self I pray thee from me; if thou wilt take the Left Hand, then I will go to the Right, or if thou depart to the Right Hand, then I will go to the Left.

Gen. xxiii. 3. Abraham would not make use of the Burying-place, where he had some mind to Bury Sarah, before he had asked for it, and it was granted; and altho' it was freely granted to him, yet before he had weighed the current Money, that it was judged to be worth; he had more mind to pay for the Field, than he had not to pay for it; and to do the Thing that was just and Right, than he had to save himself.

The Servants of Abimelech, had violently taken away a Well of Water from Abraham, and he let them have it, and quietly bore the loss of it, and went further for Water. After that, Gen. xxi. 22. Abimelech came and asked an Oath of Innocency from him, and he was Free to give it them, ver. xxv. he told Abimelech of the Well, which his Servants had taken away, which he had not heard of before. Thereby Abraham gave him to understand, that he was one, who could more easily receive Wrongs than he could do it, and was more ready to recede from his own Right, than he was to invade another's Right; he needed not therefore to be afraid of Violent or unjust doing from him, ver. 30. Abraham gave him Seven Lambs to be a Witness, that he had digged the Well, and to be a remembrance to him of his peaceable Innocent and Righteous Mind.

Gen. xiv. 14, &c. When Abraham heard that his Brother Lot was taken Captive, he Armed his trained Servants born in his House, Three Hundred and Eighteen; and Smote the four Kings,

and brought back all the Goods, and Lot and his Goods, and the Women also and the People. He went also upon that Adventure with an Intention to suppress Spoilers and Murderers and to rescue Lot and the People from Captivity; and not to enrich himself with the Goods he might recover; for he would not himself have any part of them, altho' he would not hinder his Associates from their part thereof, ver. xxi. &c. The King of Sodom said, give me the Persons and take the Goods to thy self. Abraham answered, I have lifted mine Hand unto the Lord, the most High God; that I will not take from a Thread even to a Shoelatchet, and that I will not take any Thing that is thine, lest thou should say, I have made Abraham Rich; save only that which the young Men have Eaten, and the Portion of the Men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol and Mamri let them take their Portion.

Three Hundred and Eighteen Persons under one Master, and as his Keeping is a very numerous Family; and yet it is likely, that Abraham had three or four times that number of Persons in his Family; if a Place contains twelve or fifteen hundred Persons of all conditions together; comprising the Children, Women, Aged, Sick, Lame, with the Healthful and Manly; it may be questioned, whether three hundred Men can be drawn out from them, who are Stout and Strong, able for War, and fit to be lead forth against Armed Kings and their Forces, as Abraham's Men were. If he had not full and constant Work for them all, it was the greater Goodness in him to retain and keep them; and for that end, he chose not to dwell in Houses, but in Tents or Booths, which he could take down, and set up at his Pleasure; and could remove from Place to Place, where he could find and get Sustenance: His desire and care was to provide things needful and to supply the Wants of those he had about him, and not to have his own Ease and Pleasure, nor to enrich himself by them; he lived himself in some what an hard and streightned Condition, not much easier and better than they did; and he was contented and willing to Live so, for their good.

Abraham shewed that he had much Humanity in him, and was much disposed to Goodness and delighted in it; by

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by the kind Invitation and liberal Entertainment, which he made for the three Men, who were coming to him, not knowing that they were other Persons then they appear to be. That human Goodness, the Apostle seems to have thought of, when he exhorted to Hospitality, and bid them, *Heb. xiii. 2. Be not forgetful to entertain Strangers, for thereby some have entertained Angels unawares. Gen. xviii. 2, &c. Abraham lift up his Eyes, and looked; and lo, three Men stood by him, and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the Tent-Door, and bowed himself toward the Ground; and said, my Lord, if now I have found favour in thy Sight, pass not away, I pray thee from thy Servant; let a little Water, I pray you be fetched, and wash your Feet; and rest yourselves under the Tree, and I will fetch a Morsel of Bread, and comfort ye your Hearts; after that you shall pass on, for therefore are ye come to your Servant, and they said, so do as thou hast said. His Treatment was answering to this Invitation; he very readily and freely made the best Provision for them he well could, and feasted them in an higher Manner than he was wonted to feed himself.*

The Lord intended to destroy Sodom, and Abraham very earnestly and with much Compassion, intreated, that the righteous Persons amongst them might not be destroyed with the wicked; that the whole Place might be spared, rather than the righteous be destroyed; he pleased the Justice of the Lord, as an Inducement for the sparing them. *Gen. xviii. 23, &c. Abraham drew near, and said, wilt thou also destroy the Righteous with the Wicked? Peradventure, there be fifty Righteous within the City, wilt thou also destroy and not spare the Place for the fifty Righteous that are therein? That be far from thee to do after this Manner, to slay the Righteous with the Wicked, and that the Righteous should be as the Wicked, that be from thee; shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right. He intreated for the Righteous, that is to say, for those who had a Mind and Heart to do that which was right and good to others, that which they would have to be done unto themselves; who were truly innocent, just, faithful, and also loving and merciful; who valued and preferred their Integrity, Truth and Faithfulness, their Equity, Humanity and Goodness,*
above

above their Pleasures, Profits, and other Advantages; such as these were the Righteous, whom he intreated for, that they might be spared; the great Esteem and Love, which he had for that Righteousness moved him to pity them, and to be concerned and grieved at the Danger seemed to be in, of being destroyed with the Wicked.

These Things may shew the Mind that *Abraham* had in him. His Mind and Desire was, to do that which was just and right, and good to all others; with whom he had to do; he was more careful of it, than he was of his own private Matters; he did it in humble Obedience, and with reverent Respect to God, as that which was best pleasing before him, and with Hope that God would accept him, and be merciful to him for it. And God declared his Approbation of him, and said, *Gen. xviii. 19* *I know him, that he will command his Children and his Household after him, and they shall keep the Way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment, or that which is right and good to others.*

After some Years God was pleased to shew that *Abraham* was intirely devoted to him, and could submit himself, and give up that which was most near and dear to him, and could do it, in the most hard and unnatural Way. God positively commanded him, *Gen. xxii. 2, &c.* *Take now thy Son, thine only Son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the Land of Moriah; and offer him there for a Burnt offering upon one of the Mountains which I will tell thee of.* And *Abraham* presently without Delay went to do it, in two or three Days Time, in the Journey from his Tent to the Place, he did not relent or shrink from his Purpose to do as God had bid him; being come thither, *Ver. 9.* *He built an Altar and laid the Wood in Order and bound Isaac his Son, and laid him upon it; and he had certainly done unto him, as he had been bid to do, if he had not been forbidden it by an Angel of the Lord.*

It is against the Heart of Man, even to hurt an innocent Person; it is much more against the human Affection and vertuous Love of a Father for an only Son, to slay and kill him with his own Hands, and after that to burn him. He knew that righteous Duty was

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good in itself, and pleasing in the Sight of God; he had been faithful in it, and had denied himself the Ease, Liberty, Pleasure, Profit, and Conveniences of a Master, for the Comfort of others, and did hope that God would be gracious to him for it; but he knew not any Reason why *Isaac* should be slain, and to what End and Purpose it could be, and yet he was not unwilling to do it, because God commanded it: A Son is of more Esteem and Value than much worldly Substance is; he was contented to part with an hopeful only Son, to give up the Love of a Father for him, to lose the Comfort which he had or did hope to have from him in his old Age, and to make a Burnt-offering of him, in Submission to God, who would have it to be so. People now have not much of his Goodness and Humility in them; they are not willing to part with that which they love, nor even that which might well be spared, for the Help of others, and in Duty to God as he did.

God declared his Faithfulness and Submission, and repeated the intended Blessings, and renewed the Promise to him, and to his Children. *Gen. xxii. 16, &c.* By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this Thing, and hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son; that in Blessing I will bless thee, and in Multiplying I will multiply thy Seed as the Stars of Heaven, and as the Sand which is upon the Sea-shore, and thy Seed shall possess the Gate of his Enemies, and in thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my Voice. God took upon him the Title of the God of Abraham, and would be known by it to all People, *Gen. iii. 15.* He said unto Moses, thus shalt thou say unto the Children of Israel, the Lord God of your Fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you; this is my Name for ever, and this is my Memorial unto all Generations. Those good Men did not desire an earthly Happiness, or to live to themselves, and to their own Content only; but their Desire and Care was to live righteously, and to the Good of others; he set them up for a Pattern and Example, to all those who would have the Favour and Inheritance with him, to deny themselves, and to do the Thing that

that is right and good to others, as they did; he is the God of all such People as they were, to all Generations, and for ever.

Gen. xv. 1, &c. *The Word of the Lord came to him in a Vision, saying, fear not Abram, I am thy Shield, and thy exceeding great Reward. God promised to defend and bless him, ver. 4. To give him a Son of his own, whom he asked for; ver. 5. To make his Children as the Stars of Heaven for Number. It is said, ver. 6. And he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for Righteousness.* He desired and requested a Son for his own Content; that he might have a proper Heir to his Substance, and might have some Comfort and Delight in the Enjoyment of him; but it was to be a Comfort to himself, and a Delight confined to his own Heart chiefly; others would scarcely have been the better for it, nor was it intended that they should; a Mind for righteous Duty is attended with Self-denial, and looks to the Comfort and Benefit of others; a Mind for a Son is attended with Self-pleasing, and looks to a Man's own Comfort and Benefit.

These seem to be two Things, and to differ one from another, as much as the Love of a Man's Neighbour differs from the Love of himself; or as the Desire and Concern for the Good of others, differs from the Desire and Concern for his own Satisfaction. It is Love and righteous Duty to others, and not a private Self-Satisfaction, that is suitable to the Nature and Temper of God, and does indeed please him. His Belief in the Promise of a Son was scarce any Part of his Faith; if it had been doubly strong and certain in him, it would not alone have made him a good Man. But he believed, that good and righteous Duty to others, was in the Work itself vertuous and excellent, and very acceptable in the Sight of God; that the Vision was an Expression and Proof of the Favour which God had for him. The Promise and the Expectation from it, of a Son of his own, did not so much Rejoyce and Comfort him, as the Ground and Reason of the Promise did; or as it did to see and find, that God approved of his Duty and of his Care of it, and favour'd and lov'd him for it. Before that Vision he had that Belief of the
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Duty, and had been faithful in it all along; and it was for that Belief and Faithfulness, that God looked upon him to be a very good Man, and imputed it to him for Righteousness.

Almost any Man, if he had a Promise made to him immediately from God, would do as *Abraham* did; that is, he would trust in God for the Blessing promised; and also he would the more assuredly believe and think, that his Profession and Duty, and Diligence in it, has been right and good, and pleasing in the Sight of God, and therefore God has a special Favour for him. It has been reported amongst us, (but certainly it could not be so) that one another of the assured Believers had a short Sight of Christ himself, and that Christ himself did personally appear to him. If he really thinks so, there is no doubt, but he and some other of his Brethren, are much perswaded from it; that their Trusting upon Christ, is the true Christian Faith; that their Opinions are Gospel-doctrines; that their Way of Worship is the Scripture-way; that their Love of God and Christ, and their Neighbour is real, true and hearty; that Christ owns them for his Friends, and has a special Love for them, otherwise he would not have shewed that Favour to the Believer, as to give him a Glimpse of himself, as God did to *Moses*, *Exod. xxxiii. 23.* And before they can be perswaded to think, that there is any Mistake and Iniquity in them, and that they are not the People, whom Christ will own for Believers in him, they must be brought to think, that that Appearance of Christ to their Brother, was but seeming and not real. Perhaps, it was the Appearance of that evil Spirit, that lies in wait to deceive and to destroy; and that can transform himself into the Likeness of an Angel of Light, *2 Cor. xi. 14.* whatever it was it could not be Christ, whom the Heavens must receive until the Times of Restitution of all Things, as *S. Peter* teaches, *Acts iii. 21.*

Again some of the *Papist* do believe, that in all Ages, in a Manner, certain Persons of their Church have had Visions and Revelations made to them, or have been empowered to do great Things, which it was not possible for them to do of themselves; and that they

had those Visions and that Power from Heaven, because they were religious and holy Persons. There is no doubt, but those *Papists* do the more assuredly, from the Miracles of their Saints, believe that *Papery* is the true Religion; that the Doctrines, Ordinances and Practices of it are all from Christ; that they and the *Papists* are the only People that shall be saved. Again, some Persons, to whom Providence hath given an Increase of Means, are inclined to think it to be a Sign and Proof of the Truth of their Faith and Duty; it seems to be not unusual for them to hope the better of themselves, and to look upon the present outward Blessing, to be a Kind of Declaration or Expression of the good Esteem, that God has for them and for their Profession; and we may conceive it was thus with *Abraham*, and that he did believe the Vision and Promises which God was pleased to make to him, were Testimonies of the good Esteem which God had for him, and for the righteous Duty to others, which he had been constantly careful of, in Obedience to him, and in Hope of Acceptance with him.

Visions and Miracles from God and Christ have ceased long ago. Christ taught Love and Goodness, and righteous Duty to others to be the Command and Will, and Mind of God; he shewed it to be so by his Doctrine and Example, and by the miraculous Works of Goodness, which he and the Apostles did; the hearty and effectual Belief of it, is the believing in him; it is the Faith in Christ, that has so many and so great Things spoken of it, and promised to it in the Gospel; and People, that have that Belief of it, have no Desire, and have no Need of present Miracles to assure them that it is the true Faith; they know it to be so from the Gospel, and from their own inspired Mind and Heart. *John vii. 47. If any Man will do his Will, he shall know of the Doctrine that it is of God.*

God may sometimes permit uncommon Things to be done, and may suffer unrighteous People, who have but little Mind to the good Duty to others which he commands and loves, to be perswaded by them into some formal Opinions and Ways, which with their best Belief and Diligence about them will not at last obtain for

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for them Acceptance and Mercy with him: *Moses* speaks of a Sign and Wonder which might be foretold, and might come to pass; and says, *Deut. xiii. 3.* The Lord your God proveth you, to know whether your Love the Lord your God (or Righteousness and Goodness which is best pleasing to him) with all your Heart, and with all your Soul. The Apostle says, *2 Theff. ii. 9, &c.* That the Coming of the wicked one is after the Working of Satan, with all Power and Signs, and lying Wonders, and with all Deceivableness of Unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the Love of the Truth that they might be saved, and for this Cause God shall send them strong Delusion that they should believe a Lie; that they all might be damned, who believed not the Truth, but had Pleasure in Unrighteousness. If then any People have had something strange done amongst them by an invisible Power, greater than the Power of Man and Nature; it is a great Sign that their Faith is false, that their Duty is not good, that they do not believe and obey the Truth; for it cannot be thought, that God should do any Thing in a miraculous Manner to persuade and settle People in a false Way.

Some Men seem to have thought, that the Faith of *Abraham* was his ready and full Assent to the Word of God; he did without Demurr and Doubt give credit to him, and did most certainly and firmly believe that God would give him a Son, and make his Posterity from his Son as the Stars of Heaven for Multitude, when yet there was but little Likelihood of it in the Nature of Things; and by thus readily and certainly believing the Promise, he did in his Heart confess and acknowledge God to be the most high God of Heaven and Earth; he did acknowledge to him two, at least, of his principal Properties. First, his Power; in that he was the God, who could do what he pleased here below, whither there were any natural Means for his Work, or not. And Secondly, his Truth and Faithfulness; in that he was the God, who would do according to his Word and Promise, let what will oppose to hinder it. Therefore God took it kindly and well from *Abraham*, that he did thus believe in him, and own him to be God, and did impute his Faith to him

him for Righteousness. This seems to have been the Judgment of some Men about *Abraham's Faith*.

To this it may be answer'd, that God accounts his Grace, his Love and Goodness to others, to be his greatest Excellency, his best Perfection and Property; he would be known and believed to be God by it, rather than by any other; it will help to make People innocent, just, faithful, loving and merciful, such in some Degree as he is, and such as he is delighted in, and loves; if it be duly and heartily believed that he is gracious. It is the Property which sets him above the fallen Angels and above common Men; they both have Power, but they have no Goodness; they can do mischief, and they will do but little good; they, or such as they are, are not the Angels, or the People that he will own for his Angels, or for his People; and yet that Faith of *Abraham* (as those Men seem to understand it) is not likely to make People much better, or to improve them in Love and Goodness, and righteous Duty to others for his Power and his Justice, in performing his Promise, have not much of that Grace or Duty in them.

1. As to his Power, we may consider, that if Men do believe that God has made all Things out of nothing, and does constantly strengthen and carry on present Causes and their Courses, and does order Events and Ends as he pleases; they cannot doubt of his Power to do any Thing that he shall see good to promise. His Power may be some Terror to them, if they offend him; and it may be some Comfort to them, if they please him; but it scarce shews them what is offending, and what is pleasing to him; at least, otherwise then by some Examples and Instances of his Power upon Men; and those Examples and Instances of it are an uncertain and an imperfect Rules for good and righteous Duty to them.

2. As to his Faithfulness to his Promise, we may consider, that to perform a Promise is a Part of common Justice; as bad as the World is, perhaps the greater Part of Men would not do less if they could; they

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think it to be a Thing base and evil in itself, and to be below them; to be worse than their Word, or to promise, and not to do as they promised, having no Reason to the contrary, or Necessity to hinder them. And we must have very low Thoughts of God, and of his Grace and Goodness; if we think that he could account it, as an Excellency and Glory in himself, to have so much Justice, or so much Truth and Faithfulness, as a common Man would be ashamed not to have. Or if his Example had that effect upon People, as to make them just to their Word and Promise; yet, if that was all that they were, many of them would be far from being the People, that he would have them to be: that is, righteous, loving and good to others. Assuredly then it was not, as some Men seem to have thought, that God imputed it for Righteousness to Abraham; because he did readily and certainly believe notwithstanding his Age, that God could and would, that God was able, faithful, and willing, to give him a Son, and multiply his Posterity, as he said he would.

Perhaps those Men thought, that they were in the same Mind with the Apostle, who might seem to them to lay the Property of Abraham's Faith, in his ready and full believing, that God would give him a Son and a Posterity from that Son, when he could have no Hope of it but from the Promise. The Apostle says, *Rom. iv. 18. Who against Hope believed in Hope, that he might become the Father of many Nations. Ver. 19. That he considered not his own Body now dead, &c. Ver. 20, 21. That he staggered not at the Promise of God through Unbelief, but was strong in Faith giving Glory to God; that he was fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform. Ver. 22. And therefore it was imputed to for Righteousness.* To these Things it may be answered, that the Apostle teaches in that 4th Chapter to the Romans, that the Faith of Abraham was much larger and extended further than that one People, who should descend from him; that he was the Father of the Circumcised, and the Uncircumcised; of the Jews and also of the Gentiles, in what Time

Time and Age since, and in what Place or Country soever it was they lived in; if so be, they walked in the Steps of his Faith, *ver. 22.* And made Love and Goodness, and righteous Duty to others, their Profession and Practice, as he did.

Abraham had too plainly seen, that a selfish and unrighteous Heart was natural to People; and that it was no easy Thing to convert them from it; his own Example and Exhortation could prevail but little upon them. But he knew that God could convert them, and did believe, that he would give Grace and Means, which would convert all those who should make a diligent Use of them. *Rom. iv. 18.* *Abraham against Hope (in himself) believed in Hope (from God, not principally, that he might have a Son, and a Nation from him, but) that he might become the Father of many Nations, according to that which was spoken, so shall thy Seed be.*

Abraham had little Hope of having Children of his own, and of seeing them to be righteous and good as he was; nor did he expect that other Men would be made so, in his Time; nor that he should have more Safety, Peace, and Friendship with them, than heretofore he had; these outward Afflictions were no inward Grievance to him; the Esteem and Love that God had for him, and for the Duty was much better to him, than any present Comfort, Safety, or other Advantage would have been; be his Life as low and declining as it was, and be their no Hope of seeing proper Children of his own; be the Men of the World as selfish as unjust, as ready for the Hurt and Mischief, which they could do with Safety, as they were; be his Troubles, Fears, Dangers from them as great as they were, yet no such Things as these did dishearten him from the Duty, but his Mind and Care was to approve himself to God in it. *Rom. iv. 19, 20.* *And being not weak in Faith, he considered not his own Body now dead, when he was about an hundred Years old, neither yet the Deadness of Sarah's Womb he staggered at the Promise of God through Unbelief.*

Abraham

Abraham knew very well, that righteous and good Duty to others was very excellent in itself, and very suitable to the Mind and Temper of God; and he believed, that God therefore would encourage and advance it, and would use Means to make People hearty and conscientious in it, and in some Degree such as he was; and so would make him a Father of many Nations, as he had promised to do. This Knowledge and Belief did much comfort him, and excite him to thank and praise God for it; it did much encourage him in the Duty and in Hope in God from it. So Christ teaches of him for the righteous Duty, which *Abraham* believed was so good and pleasing and in which he was so eminent; Christ taught it, and command it, and did endeavour to perswade People into the Belief of it, and to bring them to it; the Conversion of People to it, Christ calls his Day; and teaches, that *Abraham* had good Hope that God would convert them to it, and that Hope did much please and comfort him. *John* viii. 56. *Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my Day, and he saw it and was glad.* *Rom* iv. 20, 21, 22. *He was strong in Faith, giving Glory to God, and was fully perswaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform, and therefore it was imputed to him for Righteousness.*

As to the Application of the Example, the Apostle teaches that *Abraham* was a publick Person, set up as it were above us all, that we might all of us look unto him, and might learn from him; not to presume upon the Mercy of God and Christ as some People may think; but to deny ourselves, and to do the Thing that is right and good to others, as he did; we must make that Duty our Faith, for it was his Faith; and we must be faithful and hearty in it, if we would have our Faith imputed to us for Righteousness, as his was to him. *Rom* iv. 23, 24. *Now it was not written for his Sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him, that raised up Jesus our Lord from the Dead.* That is, if we believe, as *Abraham* did believe, that God is gracious in himself, in his Nature and Temper and that Love and Goodness, and righteous Duty to others, is pleasing

to him, and is good and necessary above all Things else, and if we are hearty conscientious and effectual in it; (for that Duty was the great Subject and Matter of *Abraham's* Belief, and he was hearty and faithful in it,) if we thus believe in God through Christ, we we shall then have our Belief imputed to us for Righteousness, and shall be blessed in some Measure as he was; we shall be pardoned and accepted, and saved freely and graciously for Christ's Sake. *Rom. iv. 25. Who was delivered for our Offences, and raised again for our Justification.*

It was not then the Belief of a Son, whom God had promised, or given, which was the Faith spoken of in this latter Part of the 4th Chapter to the *Romans*. There is not any good Proof for it in that Scripture. It was indeed a Comfort to *Abraham* himself, but scarce to any others, therefore it was not the Faith, for which God accounted him a righteous Man. In like Manner it may be said, that it is not an assured Confident believing in Christ, or the Application of his Redemption to a Man's self, that is now the saving justifying Faith; for that believing is a private Comfort to the Man, and but little or none to any else; therefore, God does not think a Man to be a Believer, because he does with much Confidence rely upon Christ to be saved. There is no good Proof for such a Belief in that Scripture, and if there be no Proof for it there, we may conclude, that there is no Proof for it in the whole Gospel; and then it must at last fail of those, who trust themselves upon it, but are wanting in the Duty, which they ought to do to others. But the Faith spoken of in the above said Scripture was this, *Abraham* did believe, that righteous Duty to others, (which was for their Comfort and Good, and for the Peace and Welfare of a Society) was most highly pleasing to God, and that it was most highly pleasing to him, because it was so to God; and that God would give Means, which should persuade and bring People to the Duty, and so would make him to be a Father of many Nations. He knew the Mind of God, and he knew that his own Mind and Heart was purposed and set to fulfil it; it did much rejoice him to know it;

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it bore him up to the Duty, and carried him thro' the outward Troubles and Temptations that opposed him, and God esteemed him to be a very righteous and good Man for it; and if we are hearty and faithful, in righteous Duty to others, to do to them as we would be done unto, we then are related to him, and have the same Mind in us as he had in him; and then God will look upon us to be the Children of *Abraham*, and will deal graciously with us.

C H A P. XIV.

Love and Goodness to others, was required by the Law of Moses.

THE Law of *Moses* had some righteous Commands and good Instructions in it, which might help to shew, that it was the Intent of it, and the Mind of God, that People should be converted to good and righteous Duty. They were commanded, to open their Hand wide unto their Brother, the Poor and Needy, *Deut. xv. 11.* To lend him sufficient for his Need in that which he wanteth, *Deut. xv. 8.* To take no Usury or Increase of him for it, *Exod. xxii. 25. Levit. xxv. 36. Deut. xxiii. 19, 20.* To deliver back to the poor Brother his Pledge again, when the Sun goeth down, *Exod. xxii. 26, 27. Deut. xxiv. 12, 13.* To give to the poor Servant his Hire at his Day, and not to let the Sun go down upon it, *Deut. xxiv. 14, 15.* Not to let the Servant go away empty, when the six Years of his Service were ended, but to furnish him liberally out of that which the Lord their God had blessed them with, *Deut. xv. 12, 13, 14.* Not to avenge nor bear any Grudge against their Brethren, but to love their Neighbour as themselves, *Levit. xix. 18.* To love the Stranger, for they were Strangers in the Land of *Egypt*, *Deut. x. 19.* To leave the Gleanings in their Fields and Vineyards to the Poor and Stranger,

Levit. xix. 9, 10. Deut. xxiv. 19, &c. At the Year of Jubilee to give up and restore back, the Possession or Freedom that any of them had bought, and every Man then foreturn to his own Possession and Family, *Levit. xxv. 10.* To do that was right and good in the Sight of the Lord, *Deut. vi. 18. and xiii. 18.*

To perswade the People of *Israel* to good Duty to others, God did somewhat often mention it, and remember them of it, that they were Strangers and Bondsmen, and endured much Misery in *Egypt*, and he redeemed them from it; therefore, they ought to be merciful and helpful to the Afflicted, because he had been so to them, or to their Fathers in their Affliction. God informed them of his Mind and Nature, and told them that he was merciful and gracious, and abundant in Goodness and Truth, *Exod. xxxiv. 6.* And from his Grace and Goodness was inclined and pleased to execute the Judgment of the Fatherless and Widow, and to love the Stranger in giving him Food and Raiment, *Deut. x. 18.* Therefore they must be merciful and good, because he was so; otherwise, his Wrath would wax hot against them, and destroy them, *Exod. xxii. 24.* For he was the God, who regarded not Persons nor took Rewards, *Deut. x. 17.* And who would by no Means clear the Guilty, visiting the Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children unto the third and fourth Generation, *Exod. xxxiv. 7.*

Those Commands for good Duty to others, could not much of them be done at first when the Law was given; for whilst the People continued in the Desert, they scarce had any Poor amongst them to give or lend unto, nor Servants to pay or release, nor Offences to forgive, nor Fields and Vineyards to reap and gather, nor Possessions to resign up again at the Year of Jubilee. But the Freedom and Deliverance, that God had made for the People from the *Egyptians*, his Law and Command, his Instructions, his Mind and Nature, his Presence with them, and care of them in the Desert, might and should have perswaded People into a Belief of the Necessity and Acceptableness of that Duty, and have prepared and disposed them for it. And if they had had a lively and lasting Belief of it

it and Mind for it in them, they would have done faithfully and well in it, when there was Place and Need for it amongst them; they would have done more than was expressly commanded, and would have gone beyond the Letter of the Law; but all along they had but little of that Belief and Mind in them

The Gospel teaches, that good and righteous Duty was required by the Law of Moses. Christ says, *Math. vii. 12. All Things whatsoever ye would that Men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.* *Math. ix. 13. and xii. 7. for God will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice.* *Math. v. 23, 24. Therefore if thou bring the Gift to the Altar, and there rememberest that thy Brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy Gift before the Altar and go thy Way, first be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift.* Justice, Equity, and good Duty to others, was more necessary and better before God, than Sacrifice and Worship was. Christ foretold the Judgment, and lamented at the Calamity, that would come upon the best reputed Jews for the Neglect of it. *Math. xxiii. 23. Woe unto you Scribes, Pharisees, and Hypocrites; for ye pay Tithes of Mint, Anise, and Cummi, and have omitted the weightier Matters of the Law, Judgment, Mercy and Faith, (or good Duty to others) these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.* It is said, *1 Tim. i. 5 The End of the Commandment (or of the Law) is Charity out of a pure Heart, and of good Conscience, and of Faith unfeigned.* *Gal. v. 14. For all the Law is fulfilled in one Word even in this, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.* *Rom. xiii. 8. Owe no Man any Thing but to love one another, for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the Law.* *Rom. x. 4. For Christ is the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth; or that good and righteous Duty to others which Christ taught and commanded, is the Law or the End of it, or it is the great Duty intended by it; and every one who believes it to be so, and is faithful in it, will be looked upon and esteemed, as one who has fulfilled the Law, or as a righteous Person, and will for Christ's Sake be accepted and justified.* *Rom. ix. 31. Israel hath not attained to Righteousness (or to Ac-*

ceptance with God) because they sought it not by Faith, (or not by good and righteous Duty to others) but by the Works (or Ordinances) of the Law; for they stumbled at that Stumbling Stone.

The Jew spoken of, *Math. xix. 16. to 23.* Had kept the Commandments, and had loved his Neighbour as himself, as he thought, even from his Youth; or he had not done any one wicked Thing expressly forbidden in the Law, to make him a wicked Man, but he had not done the good and righteous Duty to others, which the Law required of him, and which he should have done to make him a good Man, a negative Justice, a legal Innocency, the not doing actual Hurt and Wrong to others, is a much lesser Duty, than is the Doing that which is right and good to them, that which a Man would have done unto himself, and because he had not done it, Christ could not promise him that he should have eternal Life; but bid him, *ver. 21. Go and sell that thou hast and give to the Poor, and thou shalt have Treasure in Heaven.*

Some believing Men seem to think, that the Intent of the Law was not to make People righteous and good, but that it was to make Way for the Gospel, which was afterwards to be revealed; and in Order thereto, to bring them to some Knowledge of themselves, and to some Sight and Sense of their Sin and Misery, and of the Need they had of the *Messias*, to fulfil all Righteousness, and to suffer and satisfy for them. The People applied themselves to God by the Rites of the Law, that is, as some Men seem to think it was intended by the *Messias*; for the Rites of the Law did represent, and his Redemption of them; and it was for his Sake, and for the Redemption, which he was in due Time to make for the World, and not for their own good Works and legal Duties, that God was pleased to spare and forgive, and save any of them.——To this it may be answer'd, that if the People in the Desert, or the *Jews* in the Land, had the Sense of their own lost Condition, that Sense had not much Goodness, or much of the Gospel in it; for it was a Sense and Sorrow at their own foreseen Misery and Suffering, and not a Pity and Concern at the

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the present Misery and Suffering of others; it made them desirous of their own future Ease and Comfort, and not very desirous of the present Ease and Comfort of their Brethren; it allowed them to be indifferent in good Duty to them, at least above what was plainly commanded, for they could have no Help from them, and it was help to themselves, which they saw they wanted and did desire.

Therefore, that Sense of their Sin and Misery, if they had it in them, did not much prepare and fit them for the Gospel, or for the good Duty to others, which Christ commanded and taught, upon which People may hope for Mercy and Acceptance with God thro' him. As to trusting upon the *Messias*, if they did understand that he was intended by the Rites of the Law, and did hope for Mercy thro' him, yet that Hope had not much good Duty in it; it might comfort them with the Thoughts and Expectation of their own Redemption and Happiness, but it did not make them loving and merciful; it did not teach and shew them, that to relieve the Poor was a much better Duty, and more pleasing to God, than Worship and legal Services, and that trust upon the *Messias*, was, that Hope and Trust upon Christ the *Messias*, is not now under the Gospel, and it was not formerly under the Law, the believing in him; God does not now, and God never did heretofore, and never will accept and save any one Person upon it. The Prophets did not deny, but the *Jews* kept the Law; and did not reprove and blame them, for not looking beyond their own Work unto the *Messias* in it; but they reprov'd and blamed them for being selfish, and caring only for their own sensual and worldly Desires; for being hard and unmerciful; for not helping the necessitous and afflicted, as they might and should have done.

The Law being considered in itself; or in the Whole of it, may seem to require a legal ceremonial Worship towards God, and an harmless Innocency towards Man, rather than further and better Duty. It much commanded People to have no other Gods, and to do no Hurt to others; it had special and particular Commands about the Tabernacle, the Passover, the Sacrifices,

fices, the Offerings, about the Sabbath, the Feasts, the Appearing before him; about cleansing from Defilements; about the not eating of Bloud, and of Beasts and Birds of Prey; it did much exhort them to fear the Lord their God, and to obey and serve him, and to keep his Ordinances, Statutes and Judgments; by which the obeying him seems to have been explained, as if the Keeping those Ordinances, had been the only, or the great Duty which he would have had. But the Commands for good and righteous Duty to others seem to have been not so many in Number, nor to have been so earnestly pressed and perswaded as the Commands for some other Things were, and most of them were not in very high Instances of it; therefore, that Duty seemed not principally to be required.

For some Resolution of this Matter it may be considered, that the natural Disposition of the People of *Israel*, who were brought out of *Egypt* made it somewhat needful, that the Law given to them, should have Ordinances, and much Exhortation and Command, and Prohibition in it, that it might withhold and keep them from the Sins to which they were much inclined.

1. The People who were brought out of *Egypt* seemed to have been ignorant of Truth and Duty, and of the Life to come; or to have had but a faint Sense, and but a weak Knowledge of it. It seems as if they thought, that it was scarce needful or dutiful, and good; to serve and worship God, to pray for his Blessing, and to be thankful for it; or to deny themselves, and to restrain their Desires and Inclinations; or to be harmless, just, true, and good; but rather, that it was a Thing indifferent and scarce, sinful and evil, to live like the brute Beasts without God, having little Mind or Care for Duty to him; or to gratify their Appetites, and fulfil their Passions; or to be selfish and unhuman, and scarce so much as just to others; it seems as if they did not believe, or did not consider, that they should be recompensed in the next Life, for their good or evil Doings in this Life. Therefore

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fore it was needful that they should be often and earnestly called upon, to serve God, to keep his Commandments and his Ordinances, to fear him, to do as he did, since they had but little Mind to it; and also that at least the great Sins, which would be very injurious and hurtful to others, or provoking to God, should be strictly forbidden, and an heavy Punishment foretold (since they had not much Sense of them) that if any of them should dare to commit any such Sin he might expect to suffer much for it.

2. The People who were brought out of Egypt seem to have been sensual and idolatrous. They seemed to think (as it is somewhat natural or common for ignorant unbelieving People to think) that there was scarce any other Happiness, but eating and drinking, and mirth, and the like outward Pleasure. *Numb. xi. 4, &c. They lusted for Flesh, and complained and wept for it.* And they were licentious and intemperate in it, when they would have it, *Exod. xxxii. 6, 18, 19. The People sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play, and shouted and danced before the Calf.* Idolatry had sumptuous Feasting, and riotous Play and Pastime in it; the Heathen thought such Doings were a Service pleasing to their Gods, and did the more freely indulge themselves in them; but such Doings do still more deprave People, and strengthen their natural Inclinations, and make them light-minded and careless, presumptuous and secure, negligent of Duty, and prepared and hardned for worser Wickednesses, as they may be tempted. A sensual selfish Heart, and a renewed righteous Heart are inconsistent together, as the former is cherished and revives, the latter decays and dies. God utterly forbid Idolatry, and the bad loose Doings that did attend it; he would not suffer the People to do any Thing, which the Heathen did to their Gods, nor any Signs of their Worship to remain amongst them; he thought it needful to do so, that they might be kept from the wicked-depraving sensual Pleasures, to which they were much inclined.

3. The serious Persons amongst the People were affected at the Sight of outward Things in Religion, the appointed Sabbaths and Feasts, the punctual Washings, the embroidered Work of the Tabernacle, the rough and unhewed Stones of the Altar, the uncommon Apparel of the Priests, or the glorious Robes, and rich and splend Ornaments of the High Priest, the special Commands for Sacrifices, &c. had the Order of God for the Observance of them, and were apparent and visible to the Sight, and made a greater Awe and Reverence for him, than a simple uncompounded spiritual Worship would have done. Probably they thought, that the Sabbaths and Feasts were his Times, and that he would have them observed and kept holy to him, because he had a Pleasure and Delight therein; that outward Defilements made them offensive and distasteful to him; and that washing, as he had ordered it, did cleanse and purify them from being so. They looked upon the Tabernacle to be his Dwelling, and the Altar to be his Altar, and the Men to be his Ministers and Servants, his Deputy and Under-ruler. From the special Commands about Sacrifices, they thought that as he would be served, so he would be served according to his own Mind and Order, and not as they might please themselves; they might not be loose and careless, vain and rude before him, as the Heathen often were before their Gods; probably they were the more inclined to think, that there was much Holiness, and much of the Mind and Presence of God in holy Things, because there was much Gravity and Strictness, much curious Observance and exact Work, much Care and Trouble required, and used in them. The Disposition of the People made it needful and good, that the Law should have many Commands and Prohibitions, and Ordinances in it; which although they were not very pleasing to God in themselves, yet they did often mind them of him, and excite the Sense or the Thoughts of him in them, and did much help to keep them, at least, from being worse then they were.

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Some Things were forbidden, which may seem not to have been evil and sinful in themselves, or otherwise then because God had forbid them, as thou shalt not sow thy Field with mingled Seed. Thou shalt not sow thy Vineyard with divers Seeds. Thou shalt not plow with an Ox and an Ass together. Thou shalt not wear a Garment of divers Sorts, as of Woollen and Linen together, neither shall a Garment mingled of Linen and Woollen come upon thee, *Levit. xix. 19.* and *Deut. xxii. 9, 10, 11.* Ye shall not round the Corners of your Heads; neither shalt thou marre the Corners of thy Beard. Ye shall not make any Cuttings in your Flesh for the Dead, nor print any Marks upon you, I am the Lord, *Levit. xix. 27, 28.* These Things seem to have been sinless and indifferent, and scarce fit to have been forbidden; but it is likely, that the Heathen did them in Devotion to their Gods, and God forbid them to keep the People from the Gods, and from the Sins and Pleasures of the Heathen.

Again, the Law commanded, thou shalt not seeth a Kid in his Mother's Milk, *Exod. xxiii. 19.* and *Deut. xxiv. 21.* the Heathen did so; and then sprinkled their Gardens and Trees with that Milk, expecting that their Gods would make them the more fruitful, for that Respect and Service which they did towards them.

Again, the Law made it Death to him that should eat Bloud, *Levit. xvii. 10.* God would set his Face against him, and would cut him off. The Eating of Bloud was a great Ordinance, or an high Part of Worship amongst the Heathen; they thought that Bloud was the Meat and Food of their Gods; that their Gods came down, and drank or sucked the Bloud, whilst they eat the Flesh of their Sacrifices; that they took it friendly and well, if any one did eat of the Bloud, and did thereby as it were communicate and feast with them, and that it was a very likely Way to obtain Help and Success from them. But God would not suffer the People to eat Bloud, nor to have it to themselves for any Use; he commanded that the Bloud of Things which might be earen,

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should be poured upon the Earth as Water, *Deut. xii. 16. and 24.* And cover'd with Dust, *Levit. xvii. 13.* He commanded, that their Sacrifices should be brought before his Tabernacle, and that his Priest should sprinkle the Blood of them, upon or about his Altar, *Levit. xvii. 5, 6.* And told them that it was the Life of the Flesh, and that it was the Blood, that made an Atonement for the Soul, *Levit. xvii. 11, 14.* So God told them, and so he commanded, and would have it so; for this intend and end, that the People might be withheld from the Gods, and from the wicked sensual Doings of the Heathen.

The Fathers, *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, sojourn'd as Strangers and lodged in Tents, and chose that low and hard Way of Living, before so easy and pleasant Life, that they might be just, righteous and good to others, and God lov'd them for it; but the Men, that were brought out of *Egypt*, had more Mind to be like their Masters the *Egyptians*, and to live to their own Satisfaction and Pleasure, then they had, to be like their Fathers, and to live to the Good of others; they had not the Heart of their Fathers in them, and would not be brought to it; they were not such Men as God could like of, and therefore he destroyed them. Of all the many Thousand, the six hundred thousand Men, of twenty Years old and upward, who came out of *Egypt*; not one of them, except *Caleb* and *Josuah*, were suffered to live and enter into the promised Land; they all died sooner or later, as it were by the Hand of God in the Wilderness. God saw it fit, to shew his Displeasure and Judgment upon them, and to make the Remembrance of them a Warning to their Children and Posterity, and to others to take heed, that they do not presume to have their own Desires and Pleasures, and to neglect good and righteous Duty to others against his Command. So the Apostle seems to teach, *1 Cor. x. 5, to 12.* *With many of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the Wilderness.* Now these Things were our Examples, to the Intent we should not lust after evil Things as they also lusted. Neither be ye Idolaters as were some of them, as it is written, the People sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

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Neither let us commit Fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one Day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of Serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the Destroyer. Now all these Things happened unto them for Ensamples, and they are written for our Admonition, upon the Ends of the World are come. It is said, Heb. iii. 19. They could not enter into his Rest, because of Unbelief. And Jude 5. The Lord having saved the People out of the Land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. They had more Mind to have their own Desires and Pleasures, than they had to deny themselves, and to be righteous and good to others; this was their Unbelief, and God destroyed them for it.

The Law may help to perswade us to good and righteous Duty to others, if it be applied to it. The People were warned not to afflict the Widow, the Fatherless, the Stranger; but to help them as they needed it, since God had delivered them from the Affliction they were under. He gives us the Comforts and Enjoyments of Life, and thereby saves and keeps us from as great Affliction and Misery as the People suffered; he bids us (and it may well be expected from us) that we be merciful and good to the Poor, since he is abundantly and graciously, merciful and good to us.

God saw that the People had not a righteous Disposition in them and expressed his Concern at it. *Dent. v. 29. O that there were such an Heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my Commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their Children for ever.* And if we have that Disposition in us, and are righteous and good, to do to the Poor and to others as we would be done unto, we may then hope, that by his Blessing, it shall be well with us, and with our Children after us.

The People were much commanded and exhorted to fear God, to love him, to cleave unto him, to keep his Ordinances and Statutes, and to serve him; and they did it, as the Law plainly enjoined them; but they did not please him, because they were not righteous, merciful and good to others. And we may ob-

serve the Duties of Piety, and the Ordinances of Religion, and may be constant and devout in his Service and Worship; but if we are not righteous to others, he will be no better pleased with us, than he was with them.

Deut. iv. 2. Ye shall not add unto the World which I command you, neither shall you diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the Commandments of the Lord your God. Deut. v. 32. Ye shall observe to do as the Lord your God hath commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the Right Hand, or to the Left. We may conceive that we are bid here, to be hearty, faithful and conscientious in righteous Duty to others; for this is the great Command of God, this is his Mind and Will above any Thing else, we may not then think, that Reading, Prayer, Worship, Reverence for God, Trusting upon Christ, Patience under Afflictions, Moderation, Diligence, &c. are more needful and better than that Duty is; if we should think so, perhaps we shall add to it, and turn to the Right Hand. And on the other Side, we may not think, that it is a Duty no better than other Duties are; or that we need not to be more careful of it than common People are; or that it is a Work of the Law, by which no Man shall be justified; or that it is a Work which Heathens do, and there is not much of the Faith and Grace of the Gospel in it; or that we shall not be judged by it; if we should think thus of it, perhaps we shall diminish from it, and turn to the Left Hand. If we are faithful in it God is pleased with us; if we have but little Mind to it, he has but little Favour for us.

Moses told the People, *Deut. viii. 19, 20* If thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other Gods, and serve them and worship them; I testify against you this Day, that ye shall surely perish. As the Nations which the Lord destroyeth before your Face, so shall ye perish, because ye would not be obedient unto the Voice of the Lord your God. And *Deut. iv. 26.* I call Heaven and Earth to witness you this Day, that ye shall soon perish; ye shall not prolong your Days, but shall utterly be destroyed. And God proclaimed it in the second Commandment, *Exod. xx. 4, 5* Thou shalt not make unto thee any Graven Image, &c. for I the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children,

Children, unto third and fourth Generation of them that hate me. We may think, that the Gods which the Heathen worshipped, with their Images, were evil Spirits or Devils, and that to worship them would be a very provoking Wickedness; but notwithstanding, if we have more Mind to our Pleasure or Profit, than we have to good and righteous Duty; God will be jealous over us, and have a suspicious displeased Mind towards us, and will think us to be little better than Heathens and Idolaters, and those who hate him, and will make us, and our Children to suffer for it. If we have that selfish unrighteous Mind, then our inward Man speaks thus; as it were, to our Pleasure or Profit, and says, Thou art my God; thou art a good God to me; thou well rewardest me for my Service; the more I give my self to thee and serve thee, the better Content I have in my self; I love thee better than I love Justice, Equity and Duty to others; I will withhold what I can from them, that I may have the more to sacrifice to thee; and I make no doubt, but the more I sacrifice to thee, and bestow upon thee, the more Life and Spirit, the more Delight and Happiness, the more Hope, and the better Prospect of Things, I shall have from thee ——— No Man will speak thus, and say to his Pleasure or Profit. Thou art my God; but the Mind he has for it, before good and righteous Duty, which God commands, shews, that this is the Language and Sense of his inward Man or Heart. He may worship God, and seem to have some Religion in him; but God sees, that in his Heart he is turned from him and hates him, and sets up a God of his own, and does almost as much deserve to be visited or cut off, as if he had kneeled before an Image, and had made that Acknowledgement to an evil Spirit.

If the People did keep the Commands of God, and do that which was right and good, and pleasing to him; they were told, that they should have a peaceable, plenteous and long Life, and should be prosperous and happy, and their Children should be blessed after them. And if we keep his Commands, and are righteous and good to others in Duty and Conscience,

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we may hope that those Blessings will be given to us, and that we shall live in Peace, and shall succeed in our Works and Labour, and shall be provided for, and have our Wants supplied, and shall be kept from great Affliction, or be supported under it. *Math. vi. 33. Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness, and Food and Raiment, and the Comforts of Life shall be added to you.* But if the People did not keep his good Commands, and please him; they were told, that their Health and Strength should be diminished; their Labour should be in Vain; the Land should be unfruitful; the Enemy should subdue them; they should meet with Rebuke and Disappointment, which Way soever they turned themselves, and should end their Days in Misery. And if we are unrighteous to others, we shall have Cause to fear, that those Calamities will come upon us, and Things will be made to go against us, and we shall be opposed with Affliction and Trouble, and Evil on every Side, and shall have but little Comfort of ourselves, but shall live and die in Affliction and Misery, and after that shall be condemned for Workers of Iniquity. *Rom. i. 28. For the Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven, against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men who hold the Truth in Unrighteousness. Math. vii. 19. Every Tree that bringeth not forth good Fruit, is hewen down and cast into the Fire.*

The Law may help to perswade us to the great Command of God, to good and righteous Duty to others, if it be applied to it; his Goodness to the People, and to us; his Desire that they and we were righteous; the Exhortations to fear and love him, to serve and obey him, may help to make us careful of the Duty; since we cannot serve him so as to be well accepted, unless we are careful of it; the Admonitions and Warnings, to take heed, and to shun the false Gods and the wicked Ways of the Heathen, may help to make us afraid and wary of allowing ourselves in our own unrighteous Desires, or in the Delights of Life and Sense, lest God should have but little more Esteem for us, than he has for idolatrous Heathens; we may expect that the Blessings promised, or the Calamities threatened will come upon us, as we are

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are affected towards that Duty, or as we are faithful and do well, or as we are unfaithful, and do not do well in it.

The ceremonial Rites and Ordinances of the Law of Moses are taken away, and we are released from the Care and Charge of them; but the Duty intended and desired from them still continues; we are not released from it; we are rather more bound unto it; because we have, or we ought to have, a better Knowledge of the Mind and Nature of God, than the People had. We are now to serve God with a devout and spiritual Worship, which is proper to increase a godly Reverence in us; and which we may hope is more pleasing and suitable to him, than the ceremonial Worship of the Law was; but yet it is but Worship and Reverence; it is not very pleasing to him in itself alone; he expects that we should be righteous and good to others, as well as reverent to him; this Duty is suitable to his Mind and Nature, and is pleasing to him in itself. God was heretofore in the Time of the Law, and is now in the Time of the Gospel, and for ever will be, the same God, and of the same gracious Mind and Temper; he did formerly and does still desire and endeavour to make People like unto himself, righteous and good to others in some Degree as he is. And if from the Instructions and Admonitions of the Law, or from the Doctrines and Duties of the Gospel, or from both, we shall by his Grace and Help be truly renewed, and become heartily righteous, loving and good to others; he will be inclined from his own Mind and Temper, from his innate Goodness, to love us and to bless us, and for Christ's Sake to forgive and justify us; he will then receive us unto himself, into the Company of his Saints and Angels above.

The Law forbid Bloud, and made it Death to him that should eat it. From thence the *Anabaptists* think, that it is sinful and offensive to God to eat of Meats prepared with Bloud in them, as they eat other Food. — But this Prohibition does not bind us now; we have not the Heathen about us on every Side, as the People in the Desert had; we are not in the Danger

Danger they were in, of being drawn away from God to idolatry; we do not turn to other Gods, nor seem to turn to them by eating of such Meats for our Food and Need, and therefore we are not in Danger of Death for it.

The Heathen, as was said before, were deluded to think, that they did an high and pleasing Service to their Gods, by eating of the Bloud of their Sacrifices; and that their Gods were good-natur'd Gods, and took it kindly from them, and were the more ready and willing to help them, if they did eat of the Bloud, and thereby communicate with them. And because the Heathen thought and did so, therefore God utterly forbid Bloud to the People, and declared, *Levit. xvii. 10. That he would even set his Face against that Soul that should eat it, and would cut him off, and told them that it was the Life of the Flesh, and that it was the Bloud that made an Atonement for the Soul, ver. 11, &c.*

As to Life, it is mysterious and unintelligible, and above our Conception; we know not what it is, nor in what Part of the Body it chiefly resides whilst the Beast lives, but when the Beast is sacrificed or slain, the Life goes away from it, and cannot be eaten with any Part of it. Life seems to be a Substance different from the purer or finer Part of the Bloud, or from the material Spirit in the Beast; for that finer Part or material Spirit is in the Flesh as well as in the Bloud, and stays in it sometime, and may be eaten with it; it sooner evaporates and flies away from the Bloud, than from the Flesh. As to Bloud it is made from the Meat that is eaten, and after Death it turns to Corruption as the Flesh does; it is material and earthy, and of the like Nature with other Things allowed to be eaten; it may be mingled and prepared, and made convenient Food. Therefore to eat Meats made with Bloud in them, for our Food and Nourishment, is not evil or sinful in itself.

Neither is such eating displeasing to God; for he is an immaterial Being, or a Spirit, and does not take a Relish or a Distate from outward Things, or from the Meats which we eat for our Need, to supply the Decay of our Strength and Nature. He is gracious

in his Mind and Temper; and it is a gracious Mind, and good and righteous Duty to others, that he desires to see every one; the not eating of blouded Meats is another Thing. it hath nothing of that Duty in it; no Body is the better for it, nor intended to be so; it is indifferent and unprofitable to God, for it is not the Grace and Duty that he would have, and it is against his Mind and Nature to like well of any Man, because from a Respect and Conscience to him, he forbears to eat of such Meats, whilst the Man has a Dislike, or but an Indifferency to the righteous Duty: which God especially approves and loves the Eating of blouded Meats for our Food, seems to be of the like indifferent Nature in itself and to God, as bowing is; a Man may bow as he pleases, and give no Offence to God; but if he bowes before an Image, and worships other Gods, he then offends, and shews openly by such bowing that he is revolted from God and turned to them, and is an Idolater, and provokes God to visit him.

In like Manner a Man may eat Food made with Bloud in it, for his Need and Refreshment, if he sees good, and give no Offence to God; but if he eats it, as the Heathen did eat Bloud, in Respect and Devotion to other Gods; he then offends, and shews openly by such eating, that he is turned away from him to them, and is an Idolater, and provokes God to cut him off. It was Idolatry and the Mind for it, and not the Bowing or Eating of itself that did offend and provoke him.

Christ would have People to know, that Meats did not defile the Man, and were not sinful and distasteful to God of themselves; but that it was unrighteous selfish Heart, and the evil Things which the Man did from it, which were indeed so. *Mark vii. 14, &c. When he had called all the People unto him, he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one of you and understand, there is nothing from without a Man that entering into him can defile him; but the Things which come out of him, those are they that defile the Man, if any Man have Ears to hear, let him hear.* The Apostle blames People, not for their Eating, or not eating certain Meats, but for their

censuring and judging one another about it. He says, Rom. xiv. 14. *I know and am perswaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself. And ver 17, 18. For the Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink, but Righteousness and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost; for he that in these Things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of Men.* The Eating that he forbids, is the Eating to the Offence of another; it is the Offence, which the Man gives by his Eating and not the Eating itself, though he eats of blouded Food, that is the Sin. He says, ver. 23. *He that doubteth, is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of Faith is Sin.* Or he that eats, or does any other indifferent Thing, which he doubts or thinks is not at least harmless to another Person, and is not as he would be done unto himself; he must needs think that he does it against his Duty, and must blame and condemn himself for it; for he does it wilfully, and has regard to himself only, and to his own Mind, and not to the Peace and Content, and Good of any one else; and whatsoever is done so, in that wilful selfish Manner, and is not right and good, or at least harmless to others; that, is not agreeing with the Mind and Nature of God, nor with the Righteousness and Law of his Kingdom, nor with Charity the great Christian Duty; that, is not of Faith, and therefore it is sinful and displeasing to God, for without good and righteous Duty to others (or as the Apostle express it, Heb. xi. 6.) without Faith, it is impossible to please God. The Apostle, 1 Tim. iv. 1, &c. seems to declare, that the Commanding to abstain from Meats, as a Duty to God, as if he was affected or disaffected thereby, is a Doctrine of Devils, which some who would depart from the Faith, and give heed to seducing Spirits, would teach.

The Anabaptists may say, that Bloud is forbidden in the Gospel, Acts xv. 29. The Council at Jerusalem writ and sent to the Brethren, which were of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia; That they should abstain from Meats offered to Idols, and from Bloud, and from Things strangled, and from Fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves ye shall do well. — But this Order of the Council was made against Idolatry, the Heathen amongst whom

whom the Brethren were, thought that Fornication was little or no Sin, and that to eat of them Things was a pleasing Respect and Service to their Gods. The Brethren were forbid to eat of them, to let the Heathen see they were assuredly perswaded, that their Gods were false, their Worship was Idolatry, their Doings were wicked, their Ways were against the Mind of the God of Heaven and Earth; that they could do as the Heathen did, and yet have Peace and Life with him. The Worship and Doings of the Heathen were indeed wicked and displeasing to God; the Eating of Bloud was not so of itself; it was forbid, that by the Dislike and even Abhorrence of it, which the Brethren shewed, the Heathen might be brought to consider better of their Worship and Doing, and to see the Evil and Sin, and Danger of them, and might be converted from them unto the Christian Truth and Duty. If the Brethren had prepared and dressed Bloud, and had eaten it for Food; probably the Heathen would have made a bad or idolatrous Construction of it, and would have thought that they did it in Devotion to their Gods, or at least were not against them, and would have thought the better of themselves, and of their wicked Ways, but it was by no Means fit, that they should be so encouraged.

Again the *Anabaptist* may say, there is no Harm in forbearing to eat of bloudded Meats ——— but it seems to be not altogether harmless, to abstain as a Duty and in Conscience to God, when something else, and not that Abstinence is Duty; or to take the Judgment and Perswasion of our Teachers for the Truth of the Scriptures, when that Truth and their Judgment are different; or to comfort ourselves with the Thoughts of it at present, and afterward find, that we were deceived and are not the better for it; or to expect and hope that God is pleased with it, when he, and can have, no Pleasure in it; or that he should think the better of us, when he rather thinks the Worse of us for it; because we have an unworthy Opinion of him, and do think, that although he is God, yet that he has something of our Infirmities, or something

thing of the nice Gentleman and the delicate Lady in him, and takes an Offence and Distaste at the Food we eat, when he is no such Being; it is Sin and Righteousness, and the Neglect and Want of good Duty to others, that does indeed offend and distaste him. It is not harmless to be ignorant of the Truth, or to be mistaken about it, or to have a false Opinion of God, and of his Mind, and of the Duty which he commands, and to deceive ourselves with it. If the *Anabaptists* had a right Understanding of the Truth, they would be as conscientious of good and righteous Duty to others as they are careful not to eat of blouded Food, and then probably some of them would be better People than they are, and would please God better, much better, than they can do by that Abstinence.

C H A P. XV.

Love and Goodness to others, was the Mind and Intent of the Prophets, and the Message with which they were sent.

IF the Prophets had not so much Knowledge of natural and visible Things, yet they had more Knowledge of Truth and Righteousness, or of the Law and Mind of God, than the most learned Men amongst the *Jews* had. They could look through the Surface unto the Heart and Substance of the Law, and did see that all Things were not equally acceptable, because they were commanded; but there was a Difference between the Duties of the End, which were commanded, because they were good and pleasing to God in themselves, and the Duties of the Means, which were commanded in Order to the Duties of the End, and which were not much pleasing to God of themselves, but yet they were needful and useful for People.

ple, to bring them to the Duties of the End, which were indeed pleasing to him. Innocency and Justice, Truth and Equity, Love and Mercy, the Doing to others as People would be done unto themselves, are Duties of the End, and are agreeing with the Mind and Will of God, and are pleasing in his Sight: The Observance of the Ordinances of Religion as they are commanded, the Worship of God by them, Temperance in Eating and Drinking, Diligence in Business, are Duties of the Means, and do not sufficiently please God of themselves, and are not to be rested in; but they are needful to prepare and dispose, and enable People more freely and effectually to do the Thing, which is right and good to others; which does indeed please God, and without which Worship, Temperance and Diligence cannot do it.

If the *Jews* did keep the Ordinances and Statutes appointed, and serve God by them, and forbear the wicked and unjust Things forbidden; if also they did do a little good Duty to others, or so much of it, not as did supply the Wants and Needy, but as was plainly commanded, and as was sufficient to shew, that they did not slight and neglect the Law they were under; yet all this did not make them the People, whom God could like well of, that is, it did not make them heartily and truly, loving and merciful, righteous and good to others; therefore, he sent the Prophets to them to call upon them and exhort them, and endeavour to perswade them; to discharge that Duty better, and not to afflict the Fatherless, the Widow, or the Stranger; but to abate from their own selfish Desires and Designs, and to be more compassionate and helpful to the Poor; and to tell them, that then they should continue and live in the Land, that he had given them, and should have Peace and Prosperity; for he should love them, and bless them the better for it. *Psal. xi. 7. For the righteous Lord loveth Righteousness, his Countenance doth behold the Upright. Psal. xixiv. 14, 15. Depart from Evil and do good, seek Peace and pursue it; the Eyes of the Lord are upon the Righteous, and his Ears are open unto their Cry. Psal. xxxvii. 3. Trust in the Lord and do good, so shall thou dwell in the Land,*
and

and verily thou shalt be fed. Prov. iii. 3, 4. Let not Mercy and Truth forsake; bind them about thy Neck, write them upon the Table of thine Heart; so shalt thou find Favour and good Understanding in the Sight of God and Man. Prov. xxi. 3. To do Justice and Judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than Sacrifice. Isa. i. 16, &c. Cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek Judgment, relieve the Oppressed, judge the Fatherless, plead for the Widow; come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your Sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like Crimson, they shall be as Wool if ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the Good of the Land. Jerem. vii. 5, &c. If ye thoroughly amend your Ways and your Doings; if ye thoroughly execute Judgment between a Man and his Neighbour; if ye oppress not the Fatherless, the Stranger and the Widow, and shed not innocent Blood in this Place, neither walk after other Gods to your Hurt; then will I cause you to dwell in this Place, in the Land that I gave to your Fathers for ever and ever. Dan. iv. 27. Break off thy Sins by Righteousness, and thine Iniquities by shewing Mercy to the Poor; if it may be a Lengthning of thy Tranquility. Hosea vi. 6. I desire Mercy and not Sacrifice, and the Knowledge of God, more than Burnt-Offerings. Micah vi. 8. He hath shewed thee, O Man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God. Thus the Prophets did sometimes expressly and plainly call upon the People to be merciful and good to the Poor, and sufficiently to help them and supply their Wants; it was the great Duty that God desired, and sent them for.

Again the Prophets reprov'd the People, and foretold the Calamity that would come heavily upon them from God, for the Neglect of that Duty. Isa. iii. 15. What mean ye, that ye beat my People to Pieces, and grind the Faces of the Poor, saith the Lord of Hosts. Isa. v. 7. He looked for Judgment, but beheld Oppression for Righteousness, but behold a Cry. Jerem. v. 28, 29. They judge not the Cause, the Cause of the Fatherless, yet they prosper, and the Right of the Needy do they not judge; shall I not visit for these Things, saith the Lord? Shall not my Soul be avenged on such a Nation as this? Jerem. vi. 6, 7. This is the City to be visited, she is wholly Oppression in the Midst of her;

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Violence and Spoil is heard in her; before me continually is Grief and Wounds. Hosea iv. 1. The Lord hath a Controversy with the Inhabitants of the Land, because there is no Truth, nor Mercy, nor Knowledge of God in the Land. Amos vi. 1. Wo to them that are at Ease in Zion, &c. that drink Wine in Bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief Ointment; but they are not grieved for the Affliction of Joseph. Zechar. vii. 9, &c. Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts, saying, execute true Judgment, and shew Mercy and Compassion every Man to his Brother, and oppress not the Widow nor the Fatherless, the Stranger nor the Poor, and let none of you imagine Evil against his Brother in your Heart; but they refused to hearken, &c. yea, they made their Hearts as an Odorant-Stone, lest they should hear the Law, and the Words which the Lord of Hosts hath sent in his Spirit by the former Prophets; therefore, came a great Wrath from the Lord of Hosts.

Again, the Prophets sometimes charged the People with wilful Transgressions of the Law, in high Sins against God and against Man. They charged them, with Rebelling against God, with Blaspheming him, with serving and worshipping False Gods, with Swearing by them, with Slaying their Children, with Sorcery and Inchantment; they charged them with Oppression, with Usury and Exaction, with Bribery and Perverting of Judgment, with Lying and Swearing falsely, with Deceit and Stealing, with Violence and Robbery, with Adultery, with innocent Blood and Murder; they charged these Sins upon the People in general, or without Exception, and intimated, that all the People did commit one or the other of them; or they did commit the Iniquity and Unrighteousness towards others, which was intended by those Sins; they all had an Heart and Mind ready for it.

Those Sins were very great and grievous; and if they had been as much allowed and as common, as the Prophets said they were, they would have been intolerable, and could not have been born; if God could have bore with such Disobedience against himself; yet the People could not have bore such mischievous and injurious Doings of one against another; they would have destroyed the publick Peace and Welfare; they would

would have been almost as bad as a civil War would have been; no State, no Society of *Jews*, or of *Heathens* could have stood and continued under them. Besides, the false Prophets could not have had the Face to have cried, Peace, Peace; or if they had cried so, the People could not have believed them; if they had been such gross Transgressors of the Law, and such a provoking wicked People against God and Man, as they were said to be. It could then scarcely be, that those Charges were literally true, and that those high Sins were really and actually done by all, or by most of the People, which the Prophets charged them with.

It is more easy to be believed, and more likely to be true, that all the People from the highest to the lowest were unrighteous, and had not a true Love and Mercy in them; that none of them did care to supply the Wants of the Poor and Needy, whither they were fitted and enable for it, or were not; they felt not the Hunger, Cold and Hardship, which the Poor were forced to endure; they had not the Humanity, Compassion, and Goodness, to abate from their own Pleasures, to ease and comfort them, as Need required; it was the Work of their Hands and Heart, to make their own Profits, to fulfil their own Desires, and to content and please themselves only; they looked upon all they got, as their own, as allowed and given them for their own Mind and Desire; they grudged to be withheld from the free and full Use and Enjoyment of it, or to spare a Part of it from themselves to help and benefit the Poor.

This Unrighteousness was Iniquity and Sin; it might be said to have been almost any Thing that was so; it might in some Sense be called rebelling against God, blaspheming him, profaning his holy Name; or it might be called bowing to Images, sacrificing to false Gods, serving them, and walking after them; or it might be called Usury, or Bribery, or Oppression, or Lying, or Swearing falsely, or Deceit, or Stealing, or Robbery, or Adultery, or Murder. For if it was not one or another of those Sins properly and expressly, yet it was the Sin, or the same Thing, in the

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the End and Effect of Things; it did almost as much provoke God against them, as the Commission of one or another of those Sins would have done; so that in the Intent of his Law and Command, or in his Sense and Mind, and before him, that Unrighteousness of the People towards others, might not very improperly be said to have been all, or any of the great and known Sins, which the Prophets charged them with.

If a Man had actually committed any great Sin he knew in himself, that he had transgressed the Law, and offended God, and must amend or suffer. But the People were not convinced, that their Unrighteousness in not relieving the Poor was a great Sin, and did not very much offend God; the Prophets seemed to them to demand further Duty than the Law demanded; and if they kept the Law, they doubted not but they had Peace with God, and should be safe; let the Prophets blame and chide, and threaten as they pleased.

Jerem. ii. 23. How canst thou say, I am not polluted, I have gone after Baalim. Ver. 35. Yet thou sayest, because I am innocent (from the Bloud of the Poor) surely his Anger will turn from me; behold, I will plead with thee, because thou sayest I have not sinned.

Not but that the great Sins were done amongst them. In the Time of the Captivity, the Jews who were carried into Egypt, were resolved to burn Incense to the Queen of Heaven; *Jeremiah* would have persuaded them from it; they answer'd him, *Jerem. xlv. 17, 18. That their Fathers, Kings, and Princes, did burn Incense to her, and then had Peace and Plenty; but since she had been neglected, they had the Want of all Things, and had Misery and Calamity by the Sword and Famine.* And before that Captivity, whilst the People dwelt in their own Land, without doubt some of them did lie, or deceive, or steal, or commit Adultery, or Oppress; some of them had not so much Sense of Duty and Fear of God in them, as was sufficient to withhold them from any Sin, to which their evil Passion and Desire inclined and tempted them. But it may be considered, that only some particular Persons, or some few of the People, and not all the People, as the Prophet

charged them, did commit one or another of those Sins; and that they did it as much out of the Sight and Knowledge of others as they could, to avoid the Punishment or Shame that would follow; and that they did it against their Knowledge, and the Checks of their own Mind; but Iniquity and Unrighteousness towards others, was common and open, and allowed amongst them; they did encourage or countenance one another by an unrighteous Example to go on in it quietly and securely, and not to fear a Judgment from God; if they had been righteous, merciful and good to others, as well as innocent from such Sins, God would have spared them when he punished or destroyed the Sinners; if they had been ten righteous Persons in Sodom, he would have spared the Place for their Sakes, Gen. xviii. 32. But excepting the Prophets, perhaps he had not ten, or so many as two Men, truly righteous, heartily and faithfully good to others, amongst all the whole Nation of the Jews.

It is declared, and seems to be affirmed for a Truth, that there was not a good Man amongst them. Psal. liii. 2, 3. God looked down from Heaven upon the Children of Men, to see if there were any that did understand that did seek God; every one of them is gone back, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doth good, no not one. Isa ix. 17. Every one is an Hypocrite and evil Doer, and every Mouth speaketh folly. Jerem. ix. 2. They be all Adulterers, an Assembly of treacherous Men. Micah vii. 2. The good Man is perished out of the Earth, and there is none upright among Men they all lie in wait for Blood; they hunt every Man his Brother with a Net. Ver. 4. The Best of them is as a Brier; the most Upright is sharper than a Thorn-Hedge. Isa. lix. 4. None calleth Justice, nor any pleadeth for Truth; they trust in Vanity, and speak lies; they conceive Mischief, and bring forth Iniquity. Ver. 15, 16. The Lord saw it and it displeased him, that there was no Judgment. He saw that there was no Man, and wondered that there was no Intercessor. Or no Man who had any Mind or Care for Judgment, or for Equity, Mercy and Goodness to others, to do it himself, or to persuade People to it. Ezek. xxii. 29, 30. The People of the Land have used Oppression, and exercised Robbery, and have vexed

vexed the Poor and Needy; yea, they have oppressed the
Stranger wrongfully; and I sought for a Man among them
that should make up the Hedge, and stand in the Gap be-
fore me for the Land that I should destroy it, but I found
none. The like is said of the great City, Jer. v. 1.
Run ye to and fro through the Streets of Jerusalem, and see
now, and know, and seek in the broad Places thereof if ye
can find a Man, if there be any that executeth judgment
that seeketh the Truth, and I will pardon it.

Uprighteousness seems to have been universal in the Peo-
ple, the best of them had not the Heart to shew the Mercy
and to do the Good, help and comfort the Distressed and
Afflicted, as they might and should have done; God was
much offended at it, and sent a total Destruction up-
on them; as if they had all been gross notorious Sin-
ners, or as if all the great Wickednesses had been
actually done by them, and it had been all really and lit-
terally true, which the Prophets spoke against them.
God rejected their Sacrifices and Services; he let the
House which was built for his Name and Worship to
be burnt or destroyed; and their civil State and Go-
vernment to be broken; and the Land to be utterly
spoiled and wasted, and made a Prey to the Enemy;
he gave them all up to the Sword or to Death, or into
the Hand of the Enemy. Thus at length he punished
and even destroyed them, because the Exhortations and
Forewarnings of the Prophets were disbelieved or dis-
regarded; and did not bring them to the good Duty
to the Love and Mercy to others, which they were sent
to perswade them unto.

Probably, the Jews were as other People are, and
had the like Hearts in them. Most People are careful
for themselves and for their own Desires, and have
but little Pity and Mercy for others; the more they
are prospered and enriched, the more earnest they are
for their Pleasures and Profits, and present Satisfaction
and Designs; and have but little Mind unto, and but
little Delight in Righteous Duty and Works of Love
and Mercy; they do the Thing which they are con-
strained to do by the Law, more for their own Peace
and Safety, than for Justice's sake, or for the Love
they have for the Thing that is right and good; they

are innocent, quiet, and kind to those, who are innocent quiet, and kind to them, but they can scarce bear a small Offence from another; they think it to be no Sin or Offence to God, to demand and have their own which is due to them by Law, though it be to the great Hurt, and to near the Ruin of the Debtor; they hope to keep in Peace and Favour with God, by religious Services and Duties of Worship done to him, rather than by Duties of Righteousness, Equity, and Humanity, done to their Brethren and Neighbours, and from these Things they think themselves, to be just, and true and good Men whom God like well of. Such as this is the Mind and Way of most People; and probably, it was the Mind and Way of the *Jews*; they were no more selfish and unrighteous, and wanting in good Duty to others than People commonly are.

It is likely, that we shall take Things too strictly according to the Letter, and shall be mistaken, if we think that all or most of the *Jews* did commit the great Sins, which the Prophets may seem to accuse them of; it was their Unrighteousness that was especially intended; for it did much offend God, and did bring his Judgment upon them, almost as certainly as those great Sins would have done. The *Jews* were not a People much worse than most of us are; it is not much doubted, but if the Prophets were amongst us, they would accuse us as they did them, and say, that we oppress and afflict the Widow, the Fatherless, the Stranger; and by so doing, that we profane the Name of God, and rebel against him; when he speak to us, we say, we will not hear; that we go after other Gods, and serve them, and swear by them; that our Land is full of Idols, and we worship the Work of our own Hands, and set up Altars in our Streets to burn Incense unto *Baal*; that we are Murderers and Adulterers; that we lie, and cheat, and steal, and rob, and have the Spoil of the Poor in our Houses.

They would think, that these Accusations might not unjustly be laid against most of us, and that the vilest Names would be no Reproach. And they would sell

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is the Offence, which our Unrighteousness gives to God, and the Hurt that will come from it; as that against his Mind and Command we afflict the Widow and the Fatherless, and are unmerciful and hard-hearted, and are good to no Body, but to ourselves and Friends; that he succeeds and prospers us, and we misuse and mispend his Blessings to our own Mind and Pleasure; that we profess to be his People, and do depend upon him for our God; and yet that we are altogether unlike unto him, and have little or nothing of his Grace and Temper in us; that he looks upon us, not as his People, but as Heathens and Enemies; that he will not bear it, to have his gracious Command and Will to be disregarded and disobeyd by us, but will certainly ease himself, and be avenged of us, and make us most sadly and sorely to suffer. And when the Prophets told us these Things, we should believe them and give Regard to them, no more than the *Jews* did; we should be no more reformed and amended, in our unrighteous selfish and ungodly Heart and Doings, than they were; we should still do what we pleased ourselves for all them, with as much Confidence and Security, as those *Jews* did, who told the Prophet, or seemed to tell him, *Jerem. xviii. 12. There is no Hope but we will walk after our own Devices, and we will every one do the Imagination of his evil Heart.* For to this Purpose we should reason the Matter in our own Thoughts, or with one another, and doubt not, but we can defend ourselves against them. — We have no other God, but the God who made us, and who redeemed us to be his People for our God; we serve, worship and honour, we fear, reverence and love, we believe and hope in him, and him only. We are as just to others as the Law bids us, or binds us to be, or as we well can be. We give something to the Poor. We are as godly, as just, as true, as good, as most others are. We hate and abhor the Sins we are charged with; we know them to be heinous deadly Sins, and do think that it would scarce be fit, that we should be suffered to live, if we should commit any one of them; the Prophets do unjustly charge us with them. They tell us, we must not afflict the Widow, the Fatherless, the

the Stranger; and we do not know or any harm we ever did to any one of them. They tell us, we must amend our Doings, and we do not know what we must amend in them; for we do no Worse to others, than others do to us. Surely, these Men are not Prophets, but angry peevish Men, fitter to be slighted than respected; surely, they have a sour fretting Spirit of their own, and not the Sweet Spirit of God in them; for every Day they are making Faults and aggravating Things, and complaining and threatening; be there a Cause for it, or be there none; do we what we can, we cannot content or please them, or have a good Word from them; but we hope we please God, and have some good Esteem and Peace with him; indeed, they tell us, that God will punish us, and even destroy us; but we hope we have not much Reason to fear it, since we do not know of any Idolatry or Ungodliness, any great Sin or Injustice in ourselves, to provoke him to it. — We may conceive, that in some such Manner as this we should receive the Prophets, if God should raise again, and send them to us. And we may conceive, that in such like Manner, the Jews did receive them; who because they had not done the great Sin, and because they had no Sense of their Unrighteousness, and want of good Duty to others; therefore, they did not much regard their Reproofs, and fear their Threats, and an heavy Judgment was brought upon them for it. The Mind and Intent of God in sending the Prophets, and their Works and Endeavour was not only to reclaim evil Doers, and to restrain People from the Sins against the Law; but it was also to turn People from Unrighteousness and Iniquity, and to make them loving, merciful and good to others; it was to bring them to an Heart and Mind to do to others, as they would be done unto themselves. No Services and Duties without this did content the Prophets, and did please God from the Jews, and they will not do it from us.

CHAP. XVI.

*Religious Unrighteousness, or an unrighteous Works
ship, was the Hypocrisy of the Pharisees.*

WHEN Christ came, the Jews did not well understand the Law or the Intent of it, and the Duty expected from it; nor the Mind and Will, the Nature and Temper of God, and the Service and Duty that would be good and pleasing to him; nor the Prophets, who charged upon their Fathers grievous Sins, as Blasphemy, Idolatry, Robbery, Murder, for afflicting the Widow and the Fatherless, or for not sufficiently relieving them; nor what it was in the Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, which made them to be so well esteemed and beloved of God. The Commands and Exhortations in the Law, to forbear wicked Doings, to keep the Ordinances and Statutes appointed, to fear God, to obey and serve him, were more than the Commands for righteous Duty to others; the natural sensual and bad Disposition of the People, were brought out of Egypt, made it fit and needful at first that it should be so.

The religious Jews and Pharisees, who had some Mind to please God, and to have Acceptance and Favour with him, took the Law as they found it, and understood it as it appeared to them; or as it was expounded by the grave and wise Men, who were their Guides and Teachers; they seem to have thought, that the Law was a perfect and full Revelation of the Mind of God; and that, that which was mostly taught and commanded or exhorted to in the Law, had most of his Mind and Will in it, and that he could not like well of any Thing else above and before it; it is natural or common for People to be most careful of that which they believe is their great Duty, and is most pleasing to God; and to be careless

or indifferent, in that, which they think has not much Duty, and much of his Mind in it.

Accordingly, the *Pharisees* were strict and observant of religious Ordinances, and of Worship and Duty to God; but they were not so careful of good and righteous Duty to others, and to do to them as they would be done unto, and to shew Mercy and to help the Poor, and to do more of such Duty than was expressly commanded. Christ did much blame and reprove them, and declared the Displeasure of God against them, and foretold the Woe that would come upon them for it; he did not regard the Rules, and Orders, and Traditions of the Elders, which they observed and kept, and thought they did a more than ordinary Service and Honour to God by them; they thought him to be an ungodly wicked Man, and hated him, and could not believe any Thing that he said for their Conviction and Amendment.

Christ said, *John viii. 47. He that is of God (and has the Mind of God in him) beareth God's Words; ye therefore bear them not, because ye are not of God. John v. 42. I know, that ye have not the Love of God (or the Love that is in God towards others) in you. John v. 39. Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal Life, and they are they which testify of me. Or the good Duty to others, which I teach, it is taught in the Scriptures, it is the Sense and Intent of them, and ye cannot have eternal Life, unless ye believe it to be so. He blamed the Pharisee for cleaning the Outside of the Cup and Platter, when his inward Part was full of Ravening and Wickedness; and bid him to be a good Man to others, and then the Cup and the Platter would not offend God, Luke xi. 41. Give Alms of such Things as ye have, and behold all Things are clean unto you. He bid his Hearers Luke xvi. 9, &c. Make to yourselves Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, &c. He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much, &c. No Servant can serve two Masters, ye cannot serve God and Mammon. And ver. 14. The Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these Things, and they derided him. Ver. 15. He said unto them, ye are they which justify yourselves before Men, but God knoweth your Hearts; for that which is*
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highly esteemed amongst Men, is an Abomination in the Sight of God. Or your religious Service and Worship is so. *John ix. 39, 40.* For Judgment, I am come into this World; that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind; the Pharisees answer'd, are we blind also. *John viii. 47.* I know that ye are Arbaham's Seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my Word hath no Place in you. *Ver. 44.* Ye are of your Father the Devil, and the Lusts of your Father ye will do. To this they seemed to answer, that it was he that had the Devil in him, who went about to kill him, and not they, *ver. 48.* Say we not well, that thou art. a Samaritan and hast a Devil. He said, *Math. xxiii. 24.* Ye pay Tithe of Mint and Anise, and Cummin, and have omitted the weightier Matters of the low Judgment, Mercy and Faith; or good and righteous Duty to others. He said, *Math. xxiii. 14.* Ye devour Widows Houses, and for a Pretence make long Prayer. He compared them to whited Sepulchres, *Math. xxiii. 27.* Which appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead Mens Bones, and of all Uncleannefs. He compared them to Vipers, *Math. xxiii. 23.* That can sting, and pain, and kill, but have it not in them to do any good; and he declared, that whilst they continued such, God could not like of them, nor endure them very long, *Math. xxiii. 23.* Ye Serpents, ye Generation of Vipers, how can ye escape the Damnation of Hell.

These Reproofs and Threats could not enter into the Pharisees; they did not believe, that they were such People as to deserve them; they doubted not but they held the Truth, and did as much Duty to others as was required, and kept the Law, and pleased God, and had the Judgment of the grave and knowing Men on their Side. But notwithstanding those Reproofs and Threats from Christ shew, that it was the Want of Love and Mercy, and good and righteous Duty, and the not doing to others as they would be done unto, that was the great Iniquity and Sin in them, and that made their Services, and their most devout Worship to be accounted but Hypocrisy.

1. Some Men may think, that the great Sin of the unbelieving *Jews* was this, they would not acknowledge and own Christ to be the Christ, the Son of God, the *Messias*, who was to come. *John x 33.* For a good Work we stone thee not, but for Blasphemy, and because that thou being a Man makest thyself God ——— It may be answer'd, that it was indeed a deadly Sin, not to have owned him to have been the Son of God. *John viii. 24.* If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your Sins. It would have made the Sin more deadly, if suppose they had believed him to have been the Son of God, and yet had disbelieved and rejected his Word; his being the Son of God made it more plainly to appear, that his Word and Command of God. But his divine Sonship and Godhead was not the principal Truth, that he came to teach; it was Love and Mercy, and good Duty to others, and the Doing to them as People would be done unto themselves, that was the great and principal Truth and Duty, which he came to perswade and convert them unto; for if a Man does now firmly believe the Divinity of Christ, because it is revealed and commanded in the Gospel, and if he has more Mind to his own Designs and Desires, than he has to righteous Duty to others, that Belief will not save the Man; Christ will not own him for a Believer; God will punish him for a Worker of Iniquity, because he did not do as he bid, he did not do to others as he would be done unto himself. The Want of that Duty, rather than the Want of that Faith, is now, and was formerly the great Hypocrisy and Sin in People.

2. Some Men may think, that the *Pharisees* were not the same in Private, and before God, as they were in Publick, and before Men, or that their Worship at home in the Closet, was not answerable to their Worship abroad in the Synagogue. ——— It may be answered, than they could scarcely be thus unknown; few Men could live so to themselves as that their private Ways should not be more or less perceived and discovered;

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covered; People generally are quick-sighted to see Faults in others, and are unwilling, that others should be reputed to be more holy and better than themselves; if the *Pharisees* had been holy when they were in Sight, and loose and ungodly when they were out of Sight; it would have been known, and the People would have despised and derided them, for being Cheats and Dissemblers, and not have revered them for holy Men. But they were the same they appeared to be, if it be true as a learned Man hath said, that there was a received Opinion and a common Saying amongst the *Jews*, viz. That if but two Men were to be saved, and have a Part in the other World, the one of them would be a *Pharisee*, and the other a Scribe.

3. Some Men may think, that they served God with an outward seeming Service, and with a dissembling Devotion; their Heart and Affections did not accompany their Addresses to him. *Math. xv. 8. They drew nigh unto him with their Mouth, and honoured him with their Lips; but their Heart was far from him.* — It may be answer'd, that it is not likely that it was so; for they must needs know, that if they did dissemble in their Prayers, and could hide it from Men; yet that they could not hide it from God, and that he could not be pleased with it, and accept them for it; they could not have thought, that they had any true Holiness in them, or that they were indeed the People of God; they could not have had hope, much less Confidence of his Favour; they could not have looked down with Disdain upon any other Men, or have thought it a Debasement and a Defilement to eat and drink with them, or so much as to touch them; they could not have thought it to have been an Act of Religion and a Service to God, to trouble Christian People, because they did not worship God, and rest upon it, as they did, but believe that good and righteous Duty to others was a more pleasing Service to God, than their Worship and Ordinances were. Therefore, it is not likely, that they were only seeming and outward, and

did dissemble in their Prayers and Addresses to God, and that that was their Hypocrisy.

4. Some Men may think, that the Hypocrisy lay in their Mind and Care to seem to be holy, more than to be indeed holy; they did desire and seek a good Opinion and Reputation from People, more than they did Acceptance and Approbation from God. *Math. xxiii. 5, &c. All their Works they do for to be seen of Men; they make broad their Phylacteries, and enlarge the Borders of their Garments, and love the uppermost Rooms at Feasts, and the chief Seats in the Synagogues, and Greetings in the Markets, and to be called of Men, Rabbi, Rabbi.* — It may be answer'd, that Christ owns and grants that they did keep the Rites of the Law, and serve God by them, and he does not blame them for it, for it was commanded and made their Duty; he seems to grant (or he does not deny it) that they were devout and hearty in his Service; indeed they did desire, that others should think well of them, and take them to be holy Men; but that Desire did not hinder but they were devout and hearty before God, and did desire to please him, as well as to worship and serve him; otherwise, as was said, they could not have had an high Conceit of themselves, and a Disdain of others, and a Presumption upon his Favour, Christ bid his Disciples, *Math. v. 16. Let your Light so shine before Men, that they see your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.* There was something else in them, besides a Desire to be well thought of by others, which was a greater Sin and Hypocrisy, which God was more displeased at, and did more dislike them for it; and that was the little Belief and the low Esteem, which they had for Love and Mercy, and good and righteous Duty to others. Christ had his Disciples not to take Example by them, and not to think it enough to do so much of that Duty as they did, or as it was generally thought the Law required, or as might get them a good Word from others; for if they did no more then so, God would not esteem well of them, or think them to be deserving of a Reward from him. *Math. vi. 1. Take heed that ye do not your Alms before Men to be seen of them, otherwise*

otherwise ye have no Reward of your Father which is in Heaven. The Pharisees gave so much Alms, as it was thought the Law commanded, and as that they might from thence have glory from Men; not so much as did duely relieve the Poor, and as they were enabled to give, and they did not please God; they did as much deserve to be punished for that which they did not do, as to be rewarded for that which they did so, in that Duty. *Math. vi. 2. Verily, I say unto you, they have their Reward.* And, *Math. v. 20. For I say unto you, that except your Righteousness (or your Duty to others) shall exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no Case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.*

The Pharisees were religious above any other Men amongst the Jews, their Profession is called the strictest Sect, *Acts xxvi. 5.* But they could not bear it, that righteous Duty to others should be held to be more, or to be equally good and acceptable, and necessary, as the Worship of God was; Christ taught it to be so, and they hated him; his Disciples professed it to be so, and they persecuted them for it; most of the Persecutions made at first against the Church were by them, or by the zealous Jews their Brethren; by them came to pass the Word which Christ foretold to his Disciples. *John xvi. 2. They shall put you out of the Synagogues; yea, the Time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God Service.* We may perceive the evil malicious Mind that was in them, from the Description which St. Paul gave of himself to the Council, before his Conversion or whilst he was a Pharisee. *Acts xxvi. 9, &c. I verily thought with my self, that I ought to do many Things contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth, which Thing I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the Saints did I shut up in Prison, having received Authority from the chief Priests, and when they were put to Death, I gave my Voice against them, and I punished them in every Synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange Cities.*

Thus then the Pharisees professed to be the Saints, the special People of God, holy, and pleasing to him, more than others were; and yet they were very unlike

like to God, and had but little of his Holiness, or of his gracious Mind and Temper in them; they were not loving, merciful and good to others as he is. Their Profession and Doings were made up of Religion and Unrighteousness, or of Piety and Iniquity, and were carried on with an hot Zeal, and a cold Charity; or with a great Affection and Concern for God, and for the Duties of Worship, and with little Mind and Concern for others, and for good and righteous Duty to them. And in the Conjunction of these Things, lay the Hypocrisy which they were charged with, against their Knowledge and Belief of it,

If our Mind be to please and benefit ourselves and our near Friends, and we do not care to spare from our Desires and Satisfactions to benefit and help the Poor, and to do the Thing which is right and good to them and to others, which we would have done to ourselves; we then have much of the common Jew, and perhaps of the Pharisee in us. We may serve and worship God, and may hope and trust in his Mercy through Christ; but because we are negligent and wanting in the good and righteous Duty to others, which God desires and loves above all Things else, and which Christ especially and above all Things else, came to teach and perswade, and to bring People unto it; our Faith and Worship will be but Hypocrisy in the Sight of God; and we shall not have the Acceptance and Favour with him, which we desire and expect to have.

C H A P.

C H A P. XVII.

Love and Goodness to others is the Sense and Intent of the Commands of the Gospel.

IT is the Work of the Grace and Spirit of God, to make in People a Belief and Sense, that it is their Duty to be righteous and good to others; and from thence to perswade them, to forbear Passions, Desires, Provisions, Ease, Pleasures, Works, &c. which are needless, and may be forborne; or which are selfish, and will hinder the Duty, with this Mind and Desire, *viz.* that they may be innocent and just, true and faithful, peaceable and forgiving, loving and merciful, and may do the Thing which is right and good to others, which they would have done unto themselves.

The Grace of God enlightens good People to see and know, that this is the great Duty of the Gospel, and that they are many Ways and often faulty and failing in it; and have great Need of the Redemption of Christ, and of the Mercy of God to spare and forgive them: The Grace of God moves and excites them, to desire and pray especially, that they may be revived and strengthened, and made more free and effectual in the Duty. People generally have but little of that gracious Work, or of the Belief and Sense of that Duty in them; and but little Concern and Pity at the Miseries and Afflictions, which lie hard upon their Neighbours, and but little Mind to spare from themselves, to help and ease them; therefore, they have great Need to repent of their Unrighteousness, to abate their natural Desires, to forbear their Pleasures and selfish Satisfactions, and to be more merciful and good.

John the Baptist bid, *Math. iii. 2. Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand. Luke iii. 3. He preached the Baptism for Repentance for the Remission of Sins. He declared, ver. 5. Every Valley shall be filled, and every Mountain and Hill shall be brought low, and the Crooked shall be made strait, and the rough Ways shall be made smooth. Or in a moral Sense, the Poor shall be relieved and comforted; and the haughty and insulting, the contentious, the malicious and revengeful, the selfish Persons of any Kind, shall be made humble, peaceable, innocent, merciful and good; it is the Command of God; it is his Resolution that it shall be so; for ver. 9 The Axe is laid unto the Root of the Trees; every Tree therefore which bring not forth good Fruit, is hewen down and cast into the Fire. Ver. 11, &c. He bid the People, he that hath two Coats, let him impart to him that hath none, and he that hath Meat let him do likewise; he bid the Publicans to exact no more than was appointed them; he bid the Soldiers to be harmless and contented. He told the People that Christ was coming, and that he would have good Duty to others better observed and done, ver. 17. Whose Fan is in his Hand and he will thoroughly purge his Floor, and will gather the Wheat into his Garner, but the Chaff he will burn with Fire unquenchable. It is said, *Math. xi. 11. Among them that are born of Women there hath not risen a Greater than John the Baptist. John v. 33, 35. He bear Witness unto the Truth; he was a burning and a shining Light.**

Christ preached the same Duty and Doctrine that *John* had done, and called upon the People to repent, and to amend their selfish Doings, and become righteous and good to others, or Judgment would come upon them. *Math. iv. 17. Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand. Or as it is, Mark i. 15. The Time is fulfilled, the Kingdom of God is at Hand; repent ye, and believe the Gospel. The twelve Apostle whom he sent before him, Mark vi. 12. Went out and preached that Men should repent. Christ did much exhort to this Duty, Math. v. 42, 43, 44. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away. Love your Enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and*
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pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you' *Math. vii. 12.* All Things whatsoever ye would that Men should do to you, do ye even to them; for this is the Law and the Propkets. *Math xi. 29.* Take my Yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly, in Heart. *Math. xvi. 24.* If any Man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross, and follow me. Or let him take Example from me, and forbear his own Desires, and do good as he is enabled. *Luke vi. 36.* Be merciful, as your Father also is merciful. *Luke xii. 33.* Sell that ye have, and give Alms. *John xv. 12.* This is my Commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you. It is f.id, *John i. 17.* The Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ. Service and Worship to God was much commanded before in the Law; but Love Mercy and Goodness to others, Christ now commands and requires before it.

Christ promised Blessing and Prosperity, or at least the needful Conveniences of Life upon this Duty, *Math. vi. 33.* seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness, and all these Things, (viz. Food, Raiment, and Necessaries) shall be added unto you. *Luke vi. 35.* Do good and lend hoping for nothing again, and your Reward shall be great, and ye shall be the Children of the Highest; for he is kind to the Unthankful and to the Evil. *Ver. 38.* Give, and it shall be given unto you, good Measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall Men give into your Bosom. *Luke xviii. 29. 30.* Verily, I say unto you, there is no Man that hath left House, or Parents, or Brethren, or Wife, or Children, for the Kingdom of Gods sake; who shall not receive manifold more in this present Time, and in the World to come Life everlasting. *Math x. 42.* Whosoever shall give to drink a Cup of cold Water only, in the Name of a Disciple (or to a true Christian, to a good Person) verily, I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his Reward.

Christ promised Salvation to them who are conscientious and hearty in the Duty. *John iii. 16.* God so loved the World that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life. Love and Mercy, and good and righteous Duty to others Christ taught and commanded; and whosoever believes it to be his great Duty, and the Mind of God

above all Things else, and is indeed hearty and faithful in it, he shall be saved. *John vi. 40. This is the Will of him that sent me, that every one which (so) seeth the Son, and (so) believeth on him may have everlasting Life, and I will raise him up at the last Day. Ver. 47. Verily, verily, I say unto you, if a Man keep my saying, he shall never see Death. John xi. 25, 26. I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die. Math. vi. 14. If ye forgive Men their Trespases, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. Luke vi. 37, 38. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned; forgive, and ye shall be forgiven; give, and it shall be given unto you, &c.* for with the same Measure that you meet withal (to others) it shall be measured to you again.

Christ declared the Persons to be blessed, and in a State of Salvation who suffer unjustly, or do good. *Math. v. 3, &c.* Blessed are the Poor in Spirit; or who have but little in Enjoyment and Comfort from their mean hard and laborious Life; and yet are innocent and retain their Integrity. Blessed are they that mourn; or who patiently suffer by Iniquity from others. Blessed are the Meek; or who are tender-hearted and unwilling to aggrieve any one, though they might do it not unjustly, or not against Law. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after Righteousness; or who do indeed desire to work Righteousness, and to do unto others, as they would be done unto. Blessed are the merciful; or who are compassionate and affected at the Affliction of others, and do ease and help them as they can. Blessed are the Pure in Heart; or who are sincere and faithful in good Duty to others, and have no Desires of their own to take them off and hinder them from it. Blessed are the Peace-makers; or who for Peace and Innocency sake, do let go their own Profit, and can more easily bear, hurt, and wrong, than they can revenge it. Blessed are they which are persecuted for Righteousness sake; or who are troubled and do suffer, because they believe and profess, that Love and Mercy, and Goodness is more their Duty, and is more the Mind and Will of God,

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Christ said, *Math. viii. 10.* I have not found so great Faith; no not in Israel, or he had not found any amongst the Jews, who had that hearty and effectual Concern for a Sick and tormented Servant, as the Centurion, the Heathen Gentleman had. He said, *Math. xv. 28.* O Woman great is thy Faith; or thy Compassion and Love, though she was an Heathen. He said to another, thy Faith hath saved thee, *Luke vii. 50.* and *Luke xviii. 42.* or thy Faith hath made thee whole, *Math. ix. 22.* and *Mark x. 52.* that is, thy good and righteous Mind towards others is considered, and thou art healed of thine Infirmary for thine own Ease and Comfort, as well as the Conversion of others. Zaccheus, *Luke xix. 8, 9.* Stood and said unto the Lord, behold, Lord, the Half of my Goods I give to the Poor; and if I have taken any Thing from any Man by false Accusation, I restore him four-fold. And Jesus said unto him, this Day is Salvation come to this House for so much as he also is the Son of Abraham. Whether Zaccheus was born a Jew or an Heathen, he had the like Mind and Nature in him, that Abraham had; and was a Son more truly and really than many others were, that descended lineally from him.

Christ taught and shewed the indispensable Necessity of this Duty. *Math. v. 17.* Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. Or to teach the Duty in them more plainly and fully, to teach it to be more good, and great and necessary, than it was thought to be. *Ver. 18.* For verily I say unto you, till Heaven and Earth pass, one jot or one Tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law till all be fulfilled. Or the least righteous Duty shall not be remitted and cease. *Ver. 20.* For I say unto you, that except your Righteousness (your good Duty to others) shall exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no Case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. *Math. vi. 24.* No Man can serve two Masters, ye cannot serve God and Mammon. *Math. vii. 19.* Every Tree that bringeth not forth good Fruit is hewen down and cast into the Fire. Such will be the sad End of them, who live to themselves and are fruitless to others. So Christ teaches in the

Parable. The Man hid the Talent in the Earth, and did not let others have the Use of it to improve it; and his Lord bid, *Math. xxv. 30.* Cast ye the unprofitable Servant into outer Darkness there shall be Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth. *Math. vii. 22, 23.* Some Men will plead, that they have prophesied in Christ's Name, and have cast out Devils, and done many wonderful Works; then will I profess unto them (saith Christ) I never knew you; (or I never could think well of you) depart from me, ye that work Iniquity. The Things they did for Christ were great, and above what were common; but because they did not do the Thing that was right and good to others; Christ will not own them for his Men *Math. x. 37.* He that loveth Father or Mother, Son or Daughter more than me (or more than he does the righteous Duty to others, which I teach) is not worthy of me (or does not deserve the Esteem and Reward of a Disciple.) *Math. xvi. 26.* What is a Man profited if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? Or what shall a Man give in Exchange for his Soul? The Man may perhaps have Profit to himself at present, by getting or by saving unrighteously, or by Iniquity and Unmercifulness; but at length his Soul must make Payment, and die for it. *Math. xix. 24.* *I say unto you, it is easier for a Camel to go through the Eye of a Needle, than for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of God.* Because he trusteth in his Riches, and hath little Heart to do good, and to help the Needy with that which he might well spare them. *John xiv. 6.* *Jesus saith unto Thomas, I am the Way and the Truth, and the Life; or the Love and Mercy, and righteous Duty to others which I teach is so.* No Man cometh unto the Father but by me, or by the hearty Care and good Discharge of that Duty. *John xv. 5.* For without me ye can do nothing, or without that Duty, without being righteous and good to others, ye can have no Acceptance, no Mercy with God

The Apostles were commanded to preach the same Doctrine and Duty, and to admonish People to forbear their sensual and worldly Desires, as well as the great and known Sins; and to be loving and merciful, righteous

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ous and good to others, and so they might hope to have Pardon and Mercy with God. When Christ was about to leave them, and to ascend up into Heaven, he bid them, *Math. xxix. 19, 20.* Go ye, and teach all Nations, &c. teaching them to observe all Things whatsoever I have commanded you (it was that Duty and Things in order to it, that he taught, and consequently commanded them to teach) and lo, I am with you always even unto the End of the World, in teaching that Duty, ye shall be strengthened and comforted from above. Or as it is, *Mark xvi. 15, 16.* Go ye into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature, (or preach that Duty and Acceptance with God upon it) he that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not (or is not perswaded and brought to it) shall be damned.

And as the Apostles were ordered, so they did much perswade and exhort to that Duty. The *Jews* were grieved that Christ was crucified, and knew not what to do; the Apostles bid them to turn from their own unrighteous Mind and Ways unto Love and Mercy, and Goodness to others, which Christ came to convert People unto, and commanded them to teach, and then God would be reconciled to them. *Acts ii. 38.* Repent and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the Remission of Sins, and ye shall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost. *Acts iii. 19.* Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out; for, *ver. 26.* God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his Iniquities, or from the Care and Concern for yourselves and for your own Satisfaction, unto the Care and Concern for others, and for their Help, Benefit and good.

The Apostles declared before the Elders and Council of the *Jews*, *Acts iv. 12.* Neither is there Salvation in any other, (but in Christ) for there is none other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we must be saved. Or there is none other Duty, but righteous and good Duty to others, which Christ taught and commanded us to teach, whereby People can please God and be saved. St. Peter preached to the
Company,

Company, *Acts* x. 34, &c. That God is no Respector of Persons, but in every Nation he that feareth him, and worketh Righteousness (or does the Thing that is right and good to others) is accepted with him; that God anointed *Jesus of Nazareth* with the Holy Ghost and with Power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed with the Devil for God was with him; that God raised him from the Dead; that the Prophets witness, that through his Name whosoever believeth in him (or is perswaded to that Duty) shall receive Remissions of Sins. And God gave Testimony to the Apostles teaching, for *ver.* 44. The Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the Word. *Acts* xvi. 30, 31. The Jailer put the Question, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? The Apostles bid him, believe on the Lord *Jesus Christ*, and thou shalt be saved and thy House. Or know it for a certain Truth, that Love and Mercy, and good and righteous Duty to others, is the Duty that Christ was sent from God to teach, and that it is the Command and Will of God, whatever Men think about it; and be perswaded to it, and then God of his Mercy for Christ's Sake will forgive and save you.

St. Paul declared, *Acts* xvii. 31. That God will judge the World in Righteousness (or from the Duty that is, or that ought to be done to others) and hath given Assurance of it unto all Men, in that he hath raised Christ from the Dead. *St. Paul* had leave from *Felix*, the Heathen Governor, to speak of the Faith in Christ. And *Acts* xxiv. 25. as he reasoned of Righteousness, Temperance and Judgment to come, *Felix* trembled. He declared the Necessity of the Duty to others, which People would have done unto themselves, and of Moderation, Patience and Self-denial in order to it, and that God will judge and recompense them for it. This was the Faith in Christ that he spoke of, and *Felix* could think no other but that he spoke the Truth, and that it would be so indeed; and he was afraid that it would no be well with himself hereafter. *St. Paul* declared that it was the Work which he was sent to do, and that it was his Endeavour in all Places where he came, *Acts* xxvi. 20. To shew People, that they

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they should repent and turn to God, and do Works meet for Repentance. Or that they should be innocent from actual Sin, and besides that, that they should restrain their present Desires, and forbear their Pleasures and Profits, and selfish Satisfactions, and should be righteous and good to others, and then God would be better pleased with them.

So he taught the *Ephesians*, and afterward remembered them of it, and of his own Example and Labour amongst them, *Acts xx 32, &c.* And now, Brethren, I recommend you to God, and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among all them which are sanctified I have coveted no Man's Silver or Gold, or Apparel. *Tea, you yourselves know, that these Hands have ministered unto my Necessities, and to them that were with me. I have shewed you all Things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the Weak; and to remember the Words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, it is more blessed to give than to receive.*

This Duty is much commanded or recommended in the Epistles. *Rom. ii. 10.* God will give Glory, Honour and Peace to every Man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile; for there is no Respect of Persons with God. *Rom. xii. 9, &c.* Let Love be without Dissimulation, abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good, be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly Love. *Ver 17, &c.* Recompense to no Man evil for evil, provide Things honest in the Sight of all Men, live peaceably with all Men, avenge not yourselves, be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. *Rom. xiii. 7, 8.* Render to all their Dues owe no Man any Thing but to love one another. *Rom. xiv. 17.* For the Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink, but Righteousness and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost. *Rom. xv. 2.* Let every one of us please his Neighbour for his Good to Edification. *1 Cor. xiii. 4, &c.* Charity suffereth long and is kind, &c. seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no Evil, beareth all Things, believeth all Things, hopeth all Things, endureth all Things; Charity never faileth, Charity is greater than Faith or Hope. *1 Cor. xvi. 14.* Let all your Things be done
with

with Charity. *Gal. v. 14.* For all the Law is fulfilled in one Word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self. *Gal. vi. 2.* Bear ye one anothers Burdens, and so fulfil the Law of Christ. *Ephes. iv. 1.* I therefore the Prisoner of the Lord, beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith ye are called, with all Lowliness and Meekness, with Long-suffering, forbearing one another in Love. *Ver. 32.* Be ye kind to one another, tender-hearted forgiving one another even as God for Christ's Sake hath forgiven you. *Ephes. v. 1.* Be Followers of God, as dear Children, and walk in Love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us. *Phil. i. 9, &c.* This I pray that your Love may abound yet more and more in Knowledge and in all Judgment; that ye may approve Things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without Offence till the Day of Christ; being filled with the Fruits of Righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the Glory and Praise of God. *Phil. ii. 4.* Look not every Man on his own Things, but every Man also on the Things of others. Let this Mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. *Col. iii. 12.* Put on as the Elect of God, Bowels of Mercies, Kindness, Humbleness of Mind, Meekness, Long-suffering, forbearing one another and forgiving one another, and above all Things put on Charity, which is the Bond of Perfectness. *1 Theff. iii. 12.* The Lord make you to increase and abound in Love one towards another and towards all Men. *1 Theff. iv. 6.* Let no Man go beyond, and defraud his Brother in any Matter, because the Lord is the Avenger of all such. *1 Theff. v. 15.* See that none render evil for evil unto any Man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves and to all Men. *2 Theff. iii. 13.* Be not weary in well doing. *1 Tim. vi. 17, &c.* Charge them that are rich in this World that they do good, that they be rich in good Works ready to distribute, willing to communicate. *Tit. ii. 11.* The Grace of God that bringeth Salvation, teacheth us that denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly righteously and godly in this present World. *Heb. xiii. 1, 5, 16.* Let brotherly Love continue, let your Conversation

versation be without Covetousness, to do good and to communicate forget not, for with such Sacrifices God is well pleased *Jam. iii. 17.* The Wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be intreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits, without Partiality and without Hypocrisy. *1 Pet. i. 22.* See that ye love one another with a pure Heart fervently. *1 Pet. iii. 11, 12.* Eschew Evil and do good, seek Peace and ensue it for the Eyes of the Lord are over the Righteous, and his Ears are open unto their Prayers. *1 Pet. iv. 7, 8.* The End of all Things is at Hand, be ye therefore sober, and watch unto Prayer, and above all Things have fervent Charity among yourselves; for Charity shall cover (and prevent) the Multitude of Sins. *1 John iii. 14.* We know that we have passed from Death unto Life because we love the Brethren, he that loveth not his Brother abideth in Death. *1 John iv. 7.* Let us love one another for Love is of God; every one that loveth, is born of God and knoweth God; he that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is Love. *Ver. 12.* If we love one another God dwelleth in us, and his Love is perfected in us. *Ver 16.* God is Love, and he that dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

Sometimes People are put in Mind of their particular Duties, as Parents are exhorted to be good to their Children, and Children to be dutiful to them; Husband and Wife to be loving and submissive to one another; Masters to give unto their Servants that which is just and equal, and Servants to be true and diligent in their Work. And every one to be careful of the Duties proper to his Place and Condition; for the Content and Comfort, the Benefit and Good of those to whom they are more especially related. So the Apostle exhorts, *Rom. xii. 6, &c.* Having then Gifts differing according to the Grace that is given to us, whether Prophecy, let us Prophecy according to the Proportion of Faith; or Ministry let us wait on our Ministering; or he that teacheth on Teaching; or he that exhorteth on Exhortation; he that giveth let him do it with Simplicity; he that ruleth with Diligence; he that sheweth Mercy with Chearfulness; let Love be

without Dissimulation. 1 Pet. iv. 10 And as every Man hath received the Gift, even so minister the same one to another as good Stewards of the manifold Grace of God; if any Man speak, let him speak as the Oracles of God; if any Man minister, let him do it as of the Ability which God giveth, that God in all Things may be glorified thro' Jesus Christ. The Exhortations to Love and Mercy, and good and righteous Duty to others are frequent and many; they are more than they are to any other, and perhaps than they are to all other good Duty. It was the great and principal Intent and Desire of the Apostles in their Epistles; to remember and mind People of that Duty; to revive the Belief and Sense of it; to excite and encourage them to it; and to strengthen and comfort them in it.

He who has a Belief and Sense of that Duty, will make it the Rule and Principle of his Life and Doings; he will be true and faithful, just and upright in his Word and Promise, in his Dealing, in his Place and Work; he will be harmless and inoffensive, civil and human to his equals, to Strangers, to all with whom he has to do; he will be friendly to his Neighbours, grateful to his Friends, humble and respectful to those above him, gentle and forbearing to those below him; he will be patient in Offences, and will sometimes forgive the wrong Doer, and lose and let go his own Profit for Peace and Duty sake; and especially he will be compassionate and merciful, and will relieve and help the Poor and Afflicted, more than other Men are willing to do, who are better provided for that Duty. And that he may be the better enabled for such righteous Duty, he will be diligent in his Employment, and moderate in his Provisions; he will restrain and forbear, contentious Passions, sensual Desires, vain Recreations, worldly Designs, and selfish Satisfaction; he will know his Deficiency in the Duty, and will pray heartily to God for his Mercy to forgive him, and for his Grace to enliven and strengthen the Sense of the Duty, and to make him more constant and effectual in it.

Some

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Some People can content themselves with the Profession of the Duty, and yet do but little in it, unless it be to their Sons or Children, or to those who they think will do as much again for them, but it is not so with him; his Desire and Care is, not to benefit himself by a Pretence and Shew of the Duty, but to discharge it faithfully and well, and to do to others as he would be done unto; he cannot be not a good and righteous Man truly and sincerely, and yet be easy in himself, and have hope in God.

This great and comprehensive Duty is often signified and intended in some single Word or Expression. Sometimes it is called Love. *Rom. xiii. 10.* Love worketh no Ill to his Neighbour, therefore Love is the Fulfilling of the Law or Charity, *1 Tim. i. 5.* The End of the Commandment is Charity, out of a pure Heart and of a good Conscience, and of Faith unfeigned, *1 Cor. xiii. 3.* Though I bestow all my Goods to feed the Poor, and though I give my Body to be burned, and have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing, or Mercy, *Jam. ii. 13.* He shall have Judgment without Mercy that hath shewed no Mercy, and Mercy rejoiceth against Judgment or Peace, *2 Cor. xiii. 11.* Be of one Mind. live in Peace, and the God of Love and Peace shall be with you. *Col. iii. 15.* Let the Peace of God Rule in your Hearts; to which also ye are called in one Body. *Heb. xii. 14.* Follow Peace with all Men and Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord.

Sometimes this great and comprehensive Duty is called Truth, *2 Cor. xiii. 8.* We can do nothing against the Truth, but for the Truth. *1 Tim. ii. 4.* God will have all Men to be saved, and to come to the Knowledge of the Truth. *Rom. ii. 8.* God will render Indignation and Wrath unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the Truth, but obey Unrighteousness. *2 Theff. ii. 12.* That they all might be damned, who believed not the Truth, but had Pleasure in Unrighteousness.

Sometimes this great and comprehensive Duty is called Righteousness, *Rom. x. 10.* With the Heart Man believeth unto Righteousness. *1 John ii. 29.* If ye know

that God is righteous, ye know that every one that doth Righteousness, is born of him. *1 John* iii. 10. Whosoever doth not Righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his Brother.

Sometimes this great and comprehensive Duty is called the Gospel, *1 Cor.* i. 17. Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach the Gospel. *Phil.* i. 27. Let your Conversation be as becometh the Gospel. *2 Tim.* i. 10. Christ hath brought Life and Immortality to light thro' the Gospel. *2 Thess.* i. 8. God will take Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Sometimes this great and comprehensive Duty is call Faith *Gal.* iii. 11. The Just shall live by Faith. *Rom.* iii. 28. A Man is justified by Faith without the Deeds of the Law. *Rom.* xiv. 23. Whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin. *Heb.* xi. 6. Without Faith it is impossible to please God.

Sometimes this great and comprehensive Duty is called Christ. *Gal.* ii. 20. I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the Life which I now live in the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God. *Eph.* iii. 17. That Christ may dwell in your Hearts by Faith, that ye being rooted and grounded in Love, &c. *Rom.* xiii. 14. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no Provision for the Flesh to fulfil the Lusts thereof. *Rom.* x. 4. For Christ is the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth.

Sometimes this great and comprehensive Duty is called the Spirit. *Gal.* v. 16, 17. Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the Lusts of the Flesh; for the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh. and these are contrary the one to the other. *Rom.* viii. 1. There is no Condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh but after the Spirit. *Ver.* 6. To be carnally minded is Death, but to be spiritually minded is Life and Peace. *1 John* iii. 24. We know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us, or by the Mind disposed for Love and Goodness.

Sometimes

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Sometimes this great and comprehensive Duty is called Grace, *2 Pet. iii. 18.* Grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Heb. xii. 28.* Let us have Grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with Reverence and godly Fear. *Ephes. ii. 8.* By Grace ye are saved through Faith. *Rom. xi. 5, 6.* Election is of Grace and not of Works, or it is from Love and righteous Duty to others, and not from the Rites and Works of the Law. *Rom. v. 21.* That Grace might reign thro' Righteousness unto eternal Life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Sometimes this great and comprehensive Duty is called the new Creature. *Gal. vi. 15.* In Christ Jesus neither Circumcision availeth any Thing, nor Uncircumcision but a new Creature. *2 Cor. v. 17.* If any Man be in Christ he is a new Creature, old Things are passed away, behold all Things are become new. *Col. iii. 9, 10.* Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old Man with his Deeds, and have put on the new Man, which is renew'd in Knowledge after the Image of him that created him.

Sometimes this great and comprehensive Duty is called the Power of God. *1 Cor. i. 23, 24.* We preach Christ crucified, unto the *Jews* a Stumbling Block, and unto the *Greeks* Foolishness, but unto them which are called both *Jews* and *Greeks*, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God. *Rom. i. 16* I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the Power of God unto Salvation, to every one that believeth to the *Jew* first, and also to the *Greek*.

Sometimes this great and comprehensive Duty is called the Righteousness of God. *Rom. i. 17.* The Righteousness of God is revealed from Faith to Faith. *Rom. iii. 21, 22.* The Righteousness of God without the Law is manifest, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the Righteousness of God, which is by Faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe, for there is no Difference. *Phil. iii. 9* I desire to be found in Christ, not having mine own Righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is thro' the Faith of Christ, the Righteousness which is of God by Faith. *2 Cor. v. 21.* God hath made Christ to be
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sin for us, who knew no Sin; that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him.

Sometimes this great and comprehensive Duty is called the Love of God. *Rom. v. 5* The Love of God is shed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. *Rom. viii. 38, 39.* I am persuaded, that neither Death nor Life, &c. nor any other Creature shall be able to separate us from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. *1 John iv. 12.* If we love one another God dwelleth in us, and his Love is perfected in us. *1 John ii. 15.* If any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him, or he has not the Love that is in God in him. *2 Cor. xiii. 14.* The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all, *Amen* Or as if he had thus blessed them. — I desire and pray, that the Grace and Love, the good Nature, the kind, merciful and righteous Mind which is in Christ, and which is in God, and which is the Work of the Holy Ghost, may be truly and really in every one of you; I can desire and ask no greater, no better Blessing for you.

Those are great and high Things, and Love and Mercy, and Goodness to others, is sometimes named by one or another of them; which may teach us, that it is the same, or it is of the same Kind and Nature with that by which its named. It is Truth and Righteousness, for it is pleasing to God of it self; when other good Duties are but Helps to it, and are not much pleasing to him of themselves. It is the Gospel, for it is the great Command of it. It is Faith, it is Christ, for it is the Duty which Christ and the Apostles especially taught; and to believe heartily from Christ that it is so, is to believe in him, and is the Christian Faith. It is the Spirit, it is Grace, it is the new Man which the Holy Ghost forms and works in People, it is something of the Righteousness, and of the Love that is in God; and therefore it may not improperly be expressed by one or another of those high Things, and be named by it. It is a Duty heavenly and god-like, and not very common amongst People. Sensual and worldly Persons have it not; confident Believers and formal

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Worshippers have little more than the Profession of it. It is only in those few good People, who have the Christian Faith, the Belief and Sense of the Duty in them, who are indeed loving and merciful, and have more Mind to do the Thing, that is dutiful, good, and righteous to others, than they have to their own private Desires and Satisfaction.

The People, whom the Apostles converted, did believe that love and mercy, and goodness to others, was the Duty which Christ taught, and was the Command and Will of God; and that God sent him on Purpose to persuade to it, and to promise Forgiveness and Salvation upon it: And accordingly, they were, indeed, converted to it, and were very loving and good to others, and did hope thereby to have mercy with God. *Acts ii. 44 45. All that believe were together, and had all Things common; and sold their Possessions and Goods, and parted them to all Men, as every Man had need. And again, Acts iv. 32, &c. The Multitude of them that believed were of one Heart, and of one Soul; neither said any of them, that ought of the Things which he possessed, were his own; but they had all Things common; and great grace was upon them all (or much love and goodness was in an damong them) neither was there any amongst them that lacked, for as many as were possessors of Lands, or Houses, sold them, and and brought the Prices of the Things sold, and laid them down at the Apostles Feet, and Distribution was made unto every Man, according as he had need. Acts xi. 27. &c. It was foretold that there would be a Famine; then the Disciples at Antioch, every Man according to his Ability, sent Relief to the Brethren which dwelt in Judea. The Macedonians sent them Relief then, or some other time; and it was great grace and goodness in them to send it. For the Apostles says, 2 Cor. viii. 2. Their deep Poverty abounded unto the Riches of their Liberality. It is likely the Corinthians also did so, as he seems there to say it of them. This they all did besides the relieving their own Poor at home, they knew very well (as the Apostles says James ii. 14, &c. and 1 John iii. 17) That that Man's faith is dead, and useless, and that that Man has not the Love of God in him, who does not help his poor Brother, as he might do. They knew, that to be loving, merciful, righteous,*

righteous, and good to others, was the Faith and Duty which Christ taught, and which would obtain Mercy and Acceptance with God. They were prosecuted, for believing and professing that Duty to be better pleasing to God than any other Service was; and they endured it patiently and joyfully, or comfortably; knowing that it was for Christ, for righteousness, for God's sake, that they suffer'd; and that they should be remembered for it afterwards; they were more ready and free, more hearty and effectual in the Duty, than perhaps any People since have been. Their Example will help to shew, that this Duty is the Sense of the Gospel, and is the faith and believing in Christ, to which the Promises are made; and that unless we are faithful in it, we shall not be well accepted with God, whatever Hope, and even Assurance we may have at present.

People were warned against Things that are evil and wicked, and provoking to God; and the Things particularly warned against were very often, and for the most of them, such things as would have been mischievous and hurtful to others, or would have hindred the good Duty, that ought to be done unto them. St. Paul describes, and shews the bad Disposition and Doings, that were common in unconverted People. *Rom. i. 29, &c. Being filled with all Unrighteousness, Fornication, Wickedness, Covetousness, Maliciousness; full of envy, Murder, Debates, Deceit, Malignity; Whisperers, Backbiters, Haters of God, Disputful, Proud Boasters, Inventers of evil Things, Disobedient to Parents, without Understanding, Covenant-breakers, without natural Affection, Implacable, Unmerciful.* Such Persons as these are not, and perhaps cannot be good to others, as they ought to be, and pleasing to God. St. Paul says to the Jews, *Rom. ii. 21, 22. Thou that preachest a Man shall not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a Man should not commit Adultery, dost thou commit Adultery? Thou that abhorrest Idols, dost thou commit Sacralidge?* The Law forbids these Sins, and it can scarce be thought, that the Jew could allow himself to do them; it seems more probable, that he was selfish, and unrighteous, and did allow himself to be wanting to God's Duty to others; and that that Unrighteousness was very Offen-

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five and Provoking, and did incline God to to think and like of him, not much better, than he did of a lewd or thievish Person.

St. Paul says Rom. iii. 12, &c. *They are all gone out of the Way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doeth good no not one; their Throats is an open Sepulchre; with their Tongues they have used Deceit; the Poyson of Asps is under their Lips; whose Mouth is full of Cursing and Bitterness; their Feet are swift to shed Blood; Destruction and Misery are in their Ways; and the Way of Peace have they not known; there is no Fear of God before their Eyes.* All this may not untruly be said of those, who are unrighteous and selfish, and Care only for their own Satisfaction; who perhaps also are more ready for Mischief than they are for Mercy, and can allow themselves to do almost any thing against another, for their own Profit or Pleasure, which they think they can do by Law, and with Safety to themselves. St. Paul says to certain of the Corinthians, 1 Cor. iii. 3. *Ye are yet Carnal; for whereas there is among you Envyng, and Strife, and Divisions, are yet not Carnal, and walk as Men.* 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither Fornicators, &c. nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God.* He tells the Galatians v. 19, &c. *The Works of the Flesh are manifest, which are these, Adultery, &c. Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Heresies, Envyings, Murders, Drunkenness, Revelling, and such like; of the which I tell you, that they which do such Things, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* He told Timothy, that Love and Goodness to others would be slighted, and that People would degenerate into contrary Dispositions, and would be punished or destroyed for it. 2 Tim. iii. 1, &c. *This know, that in the last Day, perilous Times will come. For Men shall be lovers of their own selves, Covetous, Proud, Boasters, Blasphemers, Disobedient to Parents, unthankful, Unholy, without natural Affection, Truce-breakers, false Accusers, Incontinent, Fierce, Despicers of those that are Good, Traiterous, Heady, High-minded, Lovers of Pleasure more than Lovers of God, having a Form of Godliness, but denying the Power thereof;*

from such turn away. He seems to confess, they had a selfish Mind, and was unrighteous, and evil towards others, before he was converted to Christian Truth and Duty, and he would have People warned against such Dispositions. *Tit. iii. 3. For we our selves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers Lusts and Pleasures, living in Malice and Envy, hateful, and bating one another.* St. James says *iii. 14. If ye have bitter envying and strife in your Hearts, glory not, and lie not against the Truth.* This Wisdom defendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. St. Peter exhorts, *1 Pet. ii. 1. Lay aside all Malice, and all guilt, and all Hypocrisy, and Envy, and all evil Speakings.* St. John says, *1 John iii. 10. Whosoever doth not Righteous is not of God, neither he that loveth not his Brother.* *Vcr. 15. Whosoever hateth his Brother is a Murderer; and ye know that no Murderer hath eternal Life abiding in him.* Thus the Apostles did exhort or forewarn People to take heed, that they did not do any of those evil malicious Things to others, and that they did not suffer in themselves an evil malicious Mind against them. For it would be inconsistent with the Faith, and contrary to the good and righteous Duty to others, which the Faith taught and obliged them unto, Christ, will not own that Man to be a believer in him, and God will not forgive him, who shall, or is disposed to do any of those evil hurtful Things unto another Man.

The Apostles did not so expressly and so often warn People against ungodliness, or against neglecting the Worship and Service of God; for this was a Sin not so grievous and displeasing in his Sight, as unjust and hurtful Doings to others were; or perhaps as Unrighteousness or the Want of good Duty to them, and to the Poor, was, besides People might not be in so much Danger of Ungodliness, as of some other Iniquity and Sin. For probably it was formerly as it is now with People generally; too many were and are more ready and inclined of themselves, and more easily tempted, to be undutiful to others, than to be undutiful to God, and to be unmerciful, and sometimes cruel and malicious to them, and yet to expect and hope to have Mercy from him. Some Persons will eat and drink luxuriously and daintily,

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daintily, and will have their Recreations and Pleasures, and will be as like their Masters, or those about them, as they well can be; some will endeavour to effect their worldly Works and Designs, and to increase their Substance, and to enrich and advance themselves and their Children; some will exact and use Power and Law; some will flatter and use Cunning and Deceit; some will be contentious with the Meek and Peaceable; some will be revengeful against Offenders; some Persons are proud and conceited, and think highly of themselves, and will be self-willed against their Betters, and will despise their Inferiors, and are unconcerned and unmoved at the Miseries of the Afflicted. Most People have a Mind to be Gentlemen and Gentlewomen rather than to be Christian People; and to be rich, full, great, and powerful, rather than to be righteous and good: Most People make the Example of others, or that which they see others to do, and not the Commands of the Gospel, not doing as they would be done unto, the Rule and Measure of their Duty; and think it to be enough, if they are not much worse, than most of their Neighbours are. And yet they all can very securely and confidently worship God; as if they did nothing, and had nothing in them that he dislikes; or as if they were indeed such good People, as he can have a good Esteem and Kindness for. If too many of the first Christians, as it is likely, were more or less thus inclined, then it was more needful to warn them against the malicious Sins forbidden, than against a loose and careless Attendance upon the Ordinances of Religion and Worship.

It was foretold, that the Belief and Sense of good and religious Duty to others, would become low and weak, and natural and selfish Affections would arise and increase in People, and overgrow it; or that they would fall away from the Duty, or much decline in their Care and Conscience of it. St Paul tells the Elders of the Church of Ephesians, *Acts xx. 29, 30. I know this, that of your own selves shall Men arise speaking perverse Things, to draw away Disciples after them.* He tells Timothy, *2 Tim. iii. 13. The evil Men, and Seducers, shall ware worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.* and *2 Tim. iv 3, 4.*

164 *Love is the Sense and Intent, &c.* Chap: 17

That the Time will come, when they will not endure sound Doctrine; having itching Ears; and they shall turn away their Ears from the Truth, and shall be turned unto Fables.

Christ foretold, that People would much degerate, and fall away from their Duty. *Matth. xxiv. 14. Because Iniquity shall abound, the Love of many shall wax cold: Or the Heart and Care of People will be to please themselves, and therefore, they will have but little Pity and Mercy, and but little Mind, to substract from their own Desires and Satisfaction, to do good, and to ease and help the Poor and needy. He says Luke xviii. 8. When the S. n of Man cometh, shall he find Faith on the Earth? Or there will be but little Love, and Mercy, and Goodness amongst People. He says Luke xvii. 26, &c. As it was in the Days of Noah, so shall it be also in the Days of the Son of Man. They did eat, they drank, they married Wives, they were given in Marriage, until the Day that Noah entered into the Ark; and the Flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the Days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same Day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained Fire and Brimstone from Heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be, in the Day when the Son of Man is revealed. Therefore Christ giveth warning against such doings, and the Temptations and Mind to them, Luke xxi. 34. &c. Take heed to yourselves, lest at any Time your Hearts be overcharged with Surfeiting and Drunkeness, and Cures of this Life, and so that Day come upon you unawares; for as a snare shall it come upon all them, that dwell on the Face of the whole Earth; watch ye therefore and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these Things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man. Or observe and beware of the natural, and sensual, and selfish Afflictions and Passions, that may arise in you and restrain them; and make it your earnest and constant Petition to God, for his Help and Grace, to dispose and enable you, to deny your selves, and do faithful and well in good righteous Duty to others; that ye may at length be such as God can Like of and Accept; for if ye are selfish, and wanting, and faulty in that Duty, ye will not, ye cannot be accepted with him.*

CHAP.

C H A P. XVIII.

Love and Goodness to others is the Use intended from the Doctrines of the Gospel.

THE Doctrines of the Gospel are supernatural Truths, above our Apprehension; we should gain but little certainty of them by our own Observation. God hath revealed them, not that we should content ourselves with them, and think that we are his People, or that we are better than Heathens, or than common natural People are; because we know more of them than they do: For Knowledge of itself is of little Value with God; it is not that Temper of Mind, or that love, and mercy, and goodness to others, which he has in himself, and which he commands, and will have in his People; but he has revealed them, that we might know before hand what end Things will be, and how we must expect it to be with us at last; that we may not be presumptuous and secure, as if we had little else to mind but ourselves, and our Profits and Pleasures, and present Designs; but that we might know our Dependence upon him, and might fear him, and serve him, and pray unto him, and give him Thanks; and might obey his Commands and Will, and do that which is Righteous to others, which will be good and pleasing to him; remembring, as the Doctrines foretell to us, that our Condition in the next Life, will be, as our Care of our Duty in this Life is.

The Gospel gives us certainly to believe, the Predestination of God, his Providence, the Resurrection of the Dead, the Judgment at the last Day.

1. The Gospel gives us to believe the Predestination of God, as that he has purposed with himself, and Decreed from Eternity, that some, but not all People, the Righteous, but not the Unrighteous, shall be saved, and

and shall live. This is not a Willful, but a righteous Purpose; it is not because he will do as he will; but it is because the Thing is fit, and reasonable, and just, and right, and good in itself; therefore he has purposed it, and decreed it, and will do it. Love, and mercy, and goodness, makes People innocent and harmless, and also, if it may be, beneficial and helpful. Such Persons of all others are the best and the fittest for his Kingdom above; they will keep and farther the Welfare and Happiness of it; they will willingly and gladly please and rejoyce the Inhabitants of it, if they can. Therefore God has predestinated them unto it, and has intended, and resolved with himself, that they shall have and enjoy it. But much People now have more Hope in God through Christ, than they have Care and Concern for the Good of others; and if Persons of such a Disposition, were in his Kingdom, they would disturb or hinder the Peace of it; they would be wilful and lawless, and would have their own Minds and Satisfaction, though it were with the Grief and Trouble of their Fellow Subject. But he has intended that they shall not have their being in it. *Matth. xxii. 14 Many are call'd, but few are chosen* Therefore we are warned and exhorted, *Phil. ii. 12: To work out our Salvation with fear and trembling, and 1 Pet. i. 10 To give diligence to make our Calling and Election sure.* That is we are bid to be especially careful and consciencious of our Duty to others, and to desire and endeavour to be still more and more of a gracious, tender, righteous Mind and Heart: For it is the Intention of God in promising Salvation, and it is the Design and End of the Calling and Election, which we have at present, that as the Apostle says, *Eph. i. 4. That we should be holy, and without blame before him in Love, in good and righteous Duty to others.* Christ declares such People to be the Children of God, and to be intended for his Kingdom. *Matth. xxv. 34, &c. Come ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World; for I was an Hungry, and ye gave me Meat; I was Thirsty, and ye gave me Drink; I was a Stranger, and ye took me in; Naked, and ye clothed me; I was Sick, and ye visited me; I was in Prison, and ye came unto me.* They did these things from

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from the Mind, and Heart, and Love, which they had for such Goodness, and therefore they were the Children of the Father, and were predestinated and elected for his Kingdom.

2. The Gospel gives us to believe the Providence of God, as that he gives us Life, Spirit, Health, and outward Conveniencies; he continues them to us, and makes them Comfortable and Good; he succeeds our Labour. that for the most Part, it may with Moderation be sufficient for our needs; he renews the Fruits of the Earth every Year to supply our Wants; he feeds us and clothes, and some Way or other makes Provision for us, as he sees we have Need; his Care is over all Things, he feedeth the Fowls of the Air, and clotheth the Grass of the Field; and we may hope that we are of more Value with him, than these Things are. *Matth. vi. 26, 30.* If he is offended and provoked to take away any Thing that we have, or to take away the good Enjoyment of it from us, then our greatest Forecast and Endeavour cannot hinder it; in so doing he disposes of his own and not of ours. *Matth. vi. 27. Which of you by taking thought can add one Cubit to his Stature.* His Goodness is shewed upon us every Day, freely, without our Desert of it. *Acts xvii. 28. In him we Live, and Move, and have our Being. Acts xiv. 17. He gives us Rain from Heaven, and fruitful Seasons, and fills our Heart with Joy and Gladness.* The Care and Providence of God over us should move us to Fear and Reverence him, to do his Will, to do the Thing that is right and good before him, to spare from ourselves to be helpful and comfortable to others, from his abundant Goodness to us; and then we may hope, that he will see, that we shall not want what is Needful. *Matth. vi. 33. Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness, and all these Things shall be added unto you.* God is Good and Merciful even to selfish and unrighteous People, who have little Goodness and Mercy in them; he spares them and bears with them, and seems to be unwilling to punish and aggrieve them; he keeps off from them the Hardships and Troubles, which some better Persons do sometimes bear and suffer; he allows them

them a Part of the Benefits and Comforts of Life, which he provides for People; he gives them Health, Peace, and Success; he permits them at present, to get and save, or to spend and live to their own Desire and Content, his Goodness is intended, as the Apostles says, Rom. ii. 4. To lead them to Repentance, or to deny themselves, and to be good to others, as he is to them.

From the good Providence of God, to undeserving People, Christ exhorts us to be merciful and good to others; and then we shall have the Esteem, and Love of a Father from God. *Matth. v. 44. &c. Love your Enemies, Bless them that Curse you, do Good to them that Hate you, and Pray for them which despitefully Use you and Persecute you; that ye may be the Children of your Father which is in Heaven; for he maketh his sun to shine on the Evil and on the Good; and sendeth Rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye Love them that Love you, what Reward have ye? Do not even the Publicans the same? And if ye Salute your Brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the Publican so? Be ye therefore Perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is Perfect. Or be merciful and good, for Mercy and Goodness sake; and not for the Pleasure, or Profit, which ye may expect to have from the Love and Kindness which ye shew. And Luke vi. 35. Love your Enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for Nothing again; and your Reward shall be great, and ye shall be the Children of the Highest; for he is Kind to the Unthankful, and to the Evil; be ye therefore Merciful as your Father also is Merciful.*

3. The Gospel gives us to believe the Resurrection of the Dead. *John v. 28, 29. The Hour is coming, in the which all that are in their Graves, shall hear the Voice of the Son of God; and shall come forth, they that have done Good, unto the Resurrection of Life; and they that have done Evil, unto the Resurrection of Damnation. To do Evil, is to do Hurt and Wrong; it is also not to do the Good which is required and commanded; it is set here in Opposition to doing Good; and if the Good, which is required to be done, be not done, then the Evil is done: It is not to relieve and help others in their Need and Distress, but to let them continue and abide under*

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it, and bear it as they can; whilst we keep to ourselves, or Spend upon our Pleasures, that wherewith we should keep and ease them: A real Injury one to a common Man, perhaps may not be so heavy and grievous upon him, as the Need and Distress, which those People are under, is upon them, it is Evil to do the Injury to the Man, and to make Suffer by doing it: It is Evil also not to help those People; it is to make them to suffer, or to lie under their Need and Distress, by not helping them. These are both unhuman, and contrary to what a Man would have done unto himself; they are both Iniquity, and contrary to the Command of God; they are both provoking unto God. Much People, although they have not done much actual Injury to others, yet they have not relieved the Poor in their Need and Distress, as they might and should have done; they have not done as God commanded and required; therefore they will be set among those that have done Evil, and will be dealt with as Evil-doers. It will be said unto them, as it is *Matth. xxv. 41, &c.* Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels; for I was an Hungry, and ye gave me no Meat; I was Thirsty, and ye gave me no Drink; I was a Stranger, and ye took me not in; Naked, and ye Clothed me not; I was Sick and in Prison, and ye Visited me not. They had little or no Mind to spare from their own Desires and Delights to do such Duty, where there was Need for it, and which was commanded them to do, and was desired from them. Therefore God and Christ cannot but dislike them, and cannot but think them to be such as have done evil, and do deserve to be cast away. and to perish.

4. The Gospel gives us to believe the Judgment of the last Day. *Matth. xvi. 27.* The Son of Man shall come in the Glory of the Father, with his Angels; and then he shall reward every Man according to his Works. God has declared his Mind, and given his Commands; he will have People to do to others the Thing which is right and good, which they would have done unto themselves; he would have them to help and relieve the Poor, the Distressed and Afflicted, as they may and can,

or are able to do. This is his great Command ; it is the Sense of his Word and Law ; it is the Intent of Worship ; it is the Way of shewing Love, and Fear, and Trust in him : People will be looked upon to reverence, to honour, to worship, to trust in him, and to observe his Word and Law ; no farther they are Loving and Merciful, righteous, and good to others. He now requires it, for Justice, Equity, and Righteousness Sake ; for the Peace and Welfare of the People ; for the Help and Comfort of the Destitute and Afflicted ; and he will not afterwards easily pass by and pardon the Omission or Neglect of it ; nor accept of other Services done in the stead thereof. This being his great Command, it is the great Work and Duty of People, and the Judgment will proceed upon it, and the Reward will be given according to it. Therefore they must make it their great Care and Work, that they may be spared and acquitted, and have a blessed Reward at the last Day.

Christ has taught other Doctrines for Truth, which, if considered and applied, may help to persuade to love and goodness to others, or to shew the Necessity of the Duty. As *Matth. xix. 17. There is none Good but God. Matth. ix. 13. He will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice. Matth. vii. 21. Not every one that saith unto him, Lord, Lord, but he that doeth his Will shall enter into Heaven. John vi. 40. His Will is, that every one, which believeth on his Son, may have everlasting Life. Matth. v. 3, &c. That the Poor in Spirit, the Meek, the Merciful, the Pure in Heart, the Peacemakers, they that Mourn, they that hunger and thirst after Righteousness, are blessed, and therefore will be saved. Luke xvi. 10. He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much ; and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much. Mark iv. 24. With what Measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you. Luke xvi. 13. No Servant can serve two Masters ; ye cannot serve Good and Mammon. Mark x. 25. It is easier for a Camel to go through the Eye of a Needle ; than for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of God. Matth. v. 20. Except your Righteousness shall exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no Case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Luke xvii. 1, 2.*

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It is impossible but that Offences will come (that is, unjust or unmerciful Doings; the selfish evil Hearts of People do much incline them thereunto) but wo unto him through whom they come; it were better for him, that a Millstone were hanged about his Neck, and he cast into the Sea, than that he should Offend one of these litle Ones; or that then he should be unjust or unmerciful to any Person to whom he owes Justice or Mercy. Matth. v. 18. Till Heaven and Earth pass, one jot or one Tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law (of Justice and Equity, or Love or Goodness) till all be fulfilled.

The Doctrines and Truth of the Gospel are revealed, and declared, and made known to us, and are intended, to persnade us to be loving and merciful, righteous and good; and to have more Mind and Care to do unto others, as we would be done unto, than we have to our own private Desires and Designs. Therefore it will be to our greater Condemnation and Punishment, if notwithstanding the Encouragements, and Instructions, and Forewarnings, which we have or may have from them, we are negligent or unfaithful in the Duty.

C H A P. XIX.

Love and Goodness to others, is the Use Intended from the Ordinances of Religion.

THE Ordinances of Religion, help to keep up the Fear of God in us; they remember us of our Obligation to him, and Dependance upon him; and of the Duty which he requires; and of the Account we must make to him of it; his Presence makes an awful Reverance in us. The Spirit of God in and from the Ordinances stirs up the Thoughts of Things, and brings them near to us, and makes the Knowledge of them more Certain and Convincing; it effects us with the Belief and Sense of the near Concern of them to us, and of the Need we have to be careful about them;

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them; it disposes us for the Duty which he requires, and which we profess and have engaged ourselves unto it, upon the Forfeiture and Loss of the Mercy and Life, which we hope to have. The Ordinances do not naturally, and of themselves produce this Work, and Grace of the Spirit; but are Means of it, if they are used seriously, devoutly, humbly, in Duty to God, and with a Sense of our Iniquity and Weakness and of the Need we have of his Grace, and with a Desire to be made the People, he would have us to be, and has appointed them for helps to us in order to it.

The principal Ordinances are these 1. Baptism. 2. The Lord's Supper. 3. Prayer. 4. Reading the Gospel.

1 By Baptism we are enter'd into the Church, with the Hope of having Pardon, Mercy, Grace, and Eternal Life given us. And for a Man to be of the Church, or to be one whom God will own as such, it is to be not a Common, but a righteous Man, changed from his natural to a gracious Disposition; it is to have a loving, merciful, righteous Heart in him, inclined to do to others, as he would they should do unto him. The Church professes the Doctrines of the Gospel, and does the Services of Religion and Worship, and has Hope in God through Christ. But these Things are not to be rested in, as if they were sufficient, for they do not alone constitute the Church, or make People such as God and Christ will accept for his People: They are Means and Helps to righteous and good Duty to the Poor and to others; but they are not that Duty itself, and without it they do not content and please him. Therefore we should remember it, and think often upon it, that when we were baptized in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Ghost; we bound ourselves to be faithful in the Duty, which God commands, and which Christ teaches, and which the Holy Ghost endeavours to persuade and bring People unto; or we should remember and think often upon it, that we then took it upon us, and promised, to be loving and merciful, righteous and good to others. For this is the great Duty of the Gospel, and there is none other Condition or Duty, upon the which without it,

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we can reasonably expect and hope, that he should grant us the Mercy and Salvation promised to his Church and People.

Christ sent out the Apostles to make Disciples, and to Baptize, and gave them Order to teach People all Things whatsoever I have commanded you. *Matth. xxviii. 20 And all Things that he commanded were Love and Mercy, and Righteous Duty to others, or Things tending thereunto. Mark xvi. 16. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Rom. vi. 4. We are buried with him by Baptism into Death; that like as Christ was raised up from the Dead by the Glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in Newness of Life; or in Love and Mercy and Goodness to others, which is not the Life of common Men. Gal. iii. 27. As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ* Their care and work is to please him, and to observe his Commands, and to do to others as they would be done unto. *1 Pet. iii. 21. Baptism saves us, not the putting away the Filth of the Flesh, but the Answer of a good Conscience towards God, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.* The Belief and Sense of love and righteous Duty to others, is the good Conscience; and the Care to discharge it faithfully, as in the Sight of God, is the Answer to it; and this good Conscience and Answer, or this Belief and Care, continues People in the State of Salvation, into which they were entred by Baptism. *1 Cor. xii. 13. By one Spirit we are all baptized into one Body.* The Spirit of God brings People to a gracious, loving, and merciful Heart and Mind, disposed to righteous and good Duty to others. Whether they are *Jews or Gentiles*, whether they are old or young, all that are in the Church, and belong to Christ, have that Heart and Disposition wrought in them: And if we have it not in us, it may justly be feared, that we are not baptized and renew'd by his Spirit; that we are no farther united to the Body of Christ, than by an outward Shew and Profession; that we are dead or benumbed Members, and are not animated and enlivened and actuated, with the same Sense and Spirit, with which his mystical Body is enlivened and actuated. If it should be so, it will be the Worse for us, that we have been baptized.

2. In the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the passion of Christ is shewed, as it were in a Figure; his Death upon the Cross is represented by the Bread broken, and the Wine poured out. Great Blessings, as the Peace, the Mercy, the Grace of God, Redemption from Death, and Eternal Life, are obtained and purchased by his Obedience and Suffering, and are granted for his Sake: They are offered as it were a new, or the promises of them are repeated; and they are ascertained and made more sensible and sure to the worthy receiver. For the Sacrament is not a Service done by the Mind and Advice of the Minister, but it is an Ordinance appointed and commanded by Christ; therefore it is for the Spiritual Good, and gracious improvement of his People, to give them Pledges of his good Will and Favour towards them; to invite and engage them to Love and Obey him, and to do the Duty which will be pleasing to him; it is a Means whereby they receive the Assistance, Grace and Comfort of the Holy Spirit: For by devout receiving, they have the Fear and Reverence and Love of God stirr'd up in them; they have their Hope and Trust in him for his Help and Blessing revived and increased; they are comforted under the Sorrow of Afflictions that agrieve them; they are strengthened against Temptations to Iniquity, and against outward Difficulties and Hindrances; they are made more willing for the righteous and good Duty, that he would have to be done. Since these Blessings are given to the devout and worthy Receivers, it is fit and reasonable, that in our Preparation for, and receiving of the Sacrament, we should remember God and Christ, with Esteem and worthy Thoughts, with Faith and Hope, with Affection and Love, with Thankfulness; and that we should have a Sense of our natural Sin and Misery, and Sorrow for our actual Iniquities, and hearty Intentions against them, and Desires of Help from above to amend and sanctify us: And besides this inward Sense and Reverence, it is fit and necessary, that we should truly, with Mind and Heart, give up ourselves to obey God, to live to his Mind and to his Glory, and to have our Conversation according to his Desire and Command; particularly that

that we should truly, with Mind and Heart, intend by his Help and Grace, to be loving and merciful, righteous and good to others, and to do unto them as we would be done unto; for this is his Desire and Command. This is our constant Duty, and it ought to be intended then especially, when we come into the more immediate Presence of God and Christ, to communicate and feast, as it were, with him; we come not only to receive Grace and Help from him, but also to renew our Obligation to him. It was the Mind and Desire of Christ in suffering for us, to persuade us to that Duty. 2 Cor. v. 15. *He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him, which died for them and rose again.* Tit. ii. 14. *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works.*

When Christ had given the Sacrament to the Apostles, he ordained it to be a constant or lasting Ordinance, and bid, *Luke xxii. 19. This do in Remembrance of me.* Which seems to be as if he had spoken it more large, and had said, — You know what I have taught; you have seen what I have done; I will have you to do so yourselves; I will have you teach People to do so, and to be innocent, just, true, peaceable, patient, forgiving, loving and merciful, though you have hard Usage from Men, as I have commanded, and as I have been. I will have this Action to be made a sacred Ordinance; it shall put People in mind of me, and of the good Duty which I have commanded and shewed, and of the Redemption which may be hoped for from me. It shall be a visible, Sign to signify and intend the mutual Grace and Love between me and my People, and between my Father and them. It shall be a Means to revive and increase the Belief, and Sense, and Care of the Duty commanded, and of the Hope of the Mercy and Life promised. It shall be administered and received in my Name; with a Mind and Heart to be made and to become loving, merciful, righteous, and good to others, from my Example, as I have shewed and taught; and then I will take Care and see to it, they shall be justified and saved. — The Thoughts
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and Sense of the righteous Duty commanded, rather than of the Salvation promised, seems to have been intended in the Remembrance of Christ. For the Duty is the Way to the Salvation; it brings People into Favour with him, and with the Father for his sake, but the Belief of the Salvation does not always produce the Duty as it is commanded; some Persons doubt not but they shall be saved, and yet do but little in the Duty of what they might and should do. Christ can have but little Kindness for them, though they do receive the Sacrament with much Faith and Hope, and with much inward Love and Thankfulness to him.

After Supper, Christ did the lowest Work of the Servant, he washed his Disciples Feet; and shewed that it must be their Care, and Work to be helpful and good to others. He did much exhort them to love others as he had loved them; it was his Command, it was the Property of his Disciples; thereby they would shew that they loved him; thereby the Father would be glorified and would love them; Men indeed would hate them, and be malicious and cruel to them, but they should have Peace with him; and the Holy Ghost should comfort them, and their Prayers should be heard, and they should have a Place above in Heaven; he prayed for them, that they might be one with the Father and him, or might have the like gracious Heart and Mind in them. *St. John*, toward the latter End of his Gospel, *Chap. xiii. &c.* teaches, that Christ after this Manner did much exhort his Disciples, to be loving and merciful and good to others, and did desire and pray that they might be so. He makes no mention there of Christ's appointing the Sacrament. It is likely he would not have omitted to mention it, if it was an Ordinance and Service equally well pleasing to Christ, as Love and good Duty to others is.

In the Apostles Time People often came together to worship; and when they were to receive the Sacrament, those of them who were able, brought some Provision with them; and the poor People, who could bring nothing, did as freely partake of it, and were as well refreshed, as they were themselves; they had the Belief and Sense of good Duty to others in them,
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and would more freely have communicated, if they had had wherewith to have done it, than they did partake: Christ looked upon them to be his People, and had more concern for them than he had for others, and accepted the good Duty that was faithfully done unto them, as if it had been done unto himself: And thought himself rightly and duly remembred and honoured by them who did it.

But some of the *Corinthians* declined in the sense of that Duty, and began to slight and neglect it, as if it was not the main and principle Duty; they seem to have thought, that they might devoutly and comfortably receive the Sacrament and remember Christ; and so have his Favour and Benefits; altho' their Brethren that wanted, had scarce any Benefit or Help from them. They brought Provision with them, and did eat it themselves, or with one another; and did not let the Hungry and Needy to have an equal share with them. Here was no proper Christian Communion; but they who had it, had it to themselves; and they who had need of it, were made to go without it. Here was not the Love and Mercy, the Moderation and Self-denial for the good of others, which Christ commanded; but the sensual Appetite was gratified, and devoured that which should have refreshed the Hungred. 1. Cor. xi. 21. *One is Hungry and another is Drunken.* Christ suffered and was Crucified, partly at least to convince People, and to let them know the more certainly, that the Love and Mercy and Righteous Duty, which they ought to shew; and to do to others from his Commands and Examples, and in remembrance of him, is the Mind and Will of God: And in, and by that Sacrament, they do in effect declare unto Men, and make it appear, that they do believe it to be so, and do profess it; and do desire to be made sincere, and to do well in it, and do hope for Pardon and Mercy upon it. ver. 26. *For as often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do shew the Lords death till he come.* Or ye shew the Belief and Profession of that Duty, which he died to confirm. ver. 27. *Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this Bread and drink this Cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.* Unworthily

Or uncharitably, with little Mind and Heart comparative for Love and Mercy, and Goodness to others (as some of the *Corinthians* did) he shall be looked upon as one little better than a *Jew*, who crucified him or consented to it; it will be near the same thing in the end; and he will be almost as certainly condemned as if he had been such a *Jew*. ver. 29. *For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily* (or without a Sense of that Duty, and a Heart and Mind for it) *eateth and drinketh Damnation* (or Judgment) *to himself, not discerning the Lord's Body*; or not having the Love, and Pity, and Goodness for his poor Brethren, the Members of the Lord's Body, that he ought to have. ver. 30. *For this Cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.* Ver. 33. *Wherefore my Brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another*; or stay for the Poor, and take care of them, let them partake with you; let them eat and be satisfied. Ver. 34. *That ye come not together unto Condemnation.* Thus then it seems to have been: Some of the *Corinthians* did not relieve their poor Neighbours, as they might and should have done. The Sacrament, and the Remembrance of the Lord in it, and his Command and Example should have persuaded them to it, but it did not: And not to relieve them, was to do contrary to the Mind and Intent of the Lord: It was not to discern the Lord's Body; it was to receive the Sacrament unworthily; it offended him, and caused Sickness and Death to some of them.

If we understand and believe the Truth, viz. The Excellency and Acceptableness of Love and Mercy and good Duty to others, above all Things else, we shall then know our own Unrighteousness, and our Neglects and Faults, and Failings in it, we shall see the great Need there is, that Christ should have died for us, and that God should Spare, and Forgive, and amend us: The Sacrament helps to renew and increase the sense of these Things, and it is a means whereby the Mercy and Help from God which we have great need of, is Conveyed and inspired into us; it is instituted for our Improvement in that Duty; and if we have the Belief and Sense thereof in us, we may hope that we shall have Grace given us to be Righteous, Loving, and Good, as Christ desires that we should be.

Some Persons altogether neglect the Sacrament and do not receive it; they think it will trouble them, and do them more Hurt than Good. But they may consider, that it is appointed and intended for their Good; as to be a means and help by the Grace and Blessing of God, to renew and sanctify them, and to make them such Good and Righteous People, as he may be pleased for Christ's Sake to spare and save. If the good Duty desired, cannot be done perfectly and without Fault; yet it ought to be done Sincerely and Faithfully, without allowed Defects and Faults; or there is little hopes that it will be accepted. And if the Means appointed and commanded to be used in order to the good discharge of the Duty, are neglected and not used; the Defects and Faults in the Duty may be accounted as much allowed and wilfull, as the neglect of the means is, and will not easily be forgiven.

Again, some Persons think it is dangerous to receive the Sacrament; and are afraid to do it; because they are unworthy, and because it must bind them to stricter Duty than they can perform. But they may understand, that it is not the great Duty; it is in order to it; it is intended for an Help to make them more loving and righteous to others, which is the great Duty; and therefore there is not so much Danger in it as they are afraid of.

They may understand, that it binds them to no further and stricter Duty, than their Faith and Religion upon which they hope to be saved, binds them unto. They may understand, that if they are sincere and faithfull, and have an hearty good will to others; and do desire to do unto them as they would be done unto; and to have their Conversation according to the Gospel: They are not then more unworthy to receive the Sacrament than others are: They may then hope that the Sacrament will not be hurtfull, but beneficial to them, as it was intended to be; and that they shall have Grace given them whereby their Love and Righteousness, and their hope and comfort shall be made more sensible and strong in them.

Again some Persons do willingly and gladly receive the Sacrament: For they think and hope, that they

have done their Duty, and in peace with God, when they have received it reverently, devoutly, and thankfully, and are comforted, and have hope of Pardon and Life through Christ. But they may consider, that it is a Duty of the means, and therefore it is not to be rested in: It is not very pleasing to God of it self; it is further expecting of them, that they should be such good People in their Heart and Life, as Christ taught and commanded them to be; and instituted and ordained the Sacrament, as a means and help towards the making them such good People. He will be no more inclined to be gracious to us, than we are disposed to be loving and mercifull, righteous and good to others.

3. In prayer the sense and affection of the Heart is humbly submitted before God; as when we confess our Sin and Iniquity, and pray to him for Pardon; that we do it with an inward dejection and sorrow; and with repentance, or when we pray to him for his Grace and Help; that we do it with an inward perception, that we really want it, and that we can have the help we want no otherwise but from him: Or when we thank him for the mercy received or hoped for, that we think within our selves and acknowledge it before him, that we are benefited by it, and are the better for it, and that it is his undeserved Goodness to give or promise it: Or when we praise him, that we do it with an awfull reverence, and with worthy thought of him. God is a Spirit; and we have no proper conference or communion with him, but by our Spirit, or by our Mind and Heart and inward Man.

We have refreshment from Food, Clothes, Sleep; we have our Health, Strength, Limbs, Senses and Understanding; we have a quiet Habitation, Peace and Friendship with our Neighbours; Safety to our Persons and our Goods; profitable Success to our Works and Labours, from the good Care and Providence of God over us. He gives us his Word and Gospel to teach us the Truth; he gives us his Spirit, to make our knowledge of things more plain and certain, lively and effectual in us. It is the Grace and Works of the Spirit, which strengthens us against Infirmities, Desires and Passions, and against Temptations and Troubles, which

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which warns and reproveth us; which exhorts and encourages and comforts us; which often excites Thoughts and Senses in us, towards the making us Devout, Humble, Moderate, Self-denying; righteous and good People: We cannot be made such People, but by his Grace and the works of the Spirit: We cannot have any outward enjoyment, but by his Grant and Leave: We do much offend against him by Iniquity and Unrighteousness; therefore it is very necessary that we pray Heartily to him for his Mercy, Grace, and Blessing; and are thankful to him for it.

It ought to be our most hearty desire and prayer to God, that he would make us righteous and good People; and would enable us to withstand the Temptations, which may hinder us from being so happy. Christ bids us, *Luke xxi. 36. Watch and Pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass; and to stand before the Son of Man.* We shall not be accounted worthy to escape or stand, if we are not righteous and good to others: We are much inclined to have our own desires and purposes, and to think it lawful and even necessary to have them; and for their sakes to omit much of the good Duty that we ought to do: We have great need therefore to pray to God to help us to restrain and deny them; and to keep up the belief of the Duty sensible and lively in us: And we have great need, as Christ exhorts and warns, *ver. 33: Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your Hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life.* *Mark xiii 33. Take ye heed, Watch and Pray, for ye know not when the time is.* We are not so safe as some Persons may think themselves to be; we are in some danger of becoming sinfull and very evil-doers; we are in more danger of becoming unrighteous and faulty in the good Duty which God commands; and without which he will not be pleased with us, *Matth. xxvi. 41. Watch and Pray that ye enter not into Temptation; the Spirit indeed is willing, but the Flesh is weak.* If we have some sense of the Duty in us it may not keep us close to it; Temptation will arise upon us, we know not what nor when: and if God does not prevent it, they will prevail over
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that sense, and will persuade us to omit the Duty, in the whole or in part, if not to do worse. It is very needfull that we take heed and watch against our own Hearts; and against outward things that may effect them, and become Temptations; and that we pray heartily to God, that he would mercifully help us to reject them; and that he would dispose and enable us, for good and righteous Duty; as well as that he would keep us from wrong-doing, and intemperance, and other actual Sins and Wickednesses.

That Duty seems to be the subject of the Prayer, which Christ taught his Disciples and bid them to say it. *Matth. vi. 9. Luke xi. 2.* It seems to be carried through it, and some thing of it, or relating to it to be signified in most of the expressions — [*Our Father*] God hath given us discretion and freedom, and some belief and love for Justice, Equity, and good Duty to others; he has given us some thing of his own Nature, and thereby shews, that he has some regard and care for us. — [*which art in Heaven,*] he is supreme, and infinitely above us, and has no need of us; but because we have some thing of his Mind and Temper in us, and do desire, that by his Spirit it may be increased, and that we might be made still more like unto him; therefore we have the encouragement and hope that Children have; and do pray unto him, as unto our Father which art in Heaven. — [*Hallowed be thy Name,*] here we seem to be taught and bid to express the great esteem and reverence, which we have, or ought to have of him; for that his Goodness is no less than his Power and Greatness. — [*thy Kingdom come,*] love and mercy and goodness to others, is the Property of his Kingdom and of his People: It supplies the wants, and sometimes more than the bare wants of the Poor and Needy; it makes all and each of his People to be in a manner equally comfortable and happy in themselves, although their outward conditions are different. And we pray and speak our desire or wish, that that Heart and Love might be in all People, and that they might be righteous and good; such as he might be pleased to have and to own for his People, and

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and for the Subjects of his Kingdom. — (*thy will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven:*) Love, and Mercy, and Goodness to others, is his will and command; and we pray that by his Grace and Help, we may be as ready, as effectual, as constant in the works and duties of it, as the Angels in Heaven are. (*give us this Day our daily Bread*), or that he would give us the Necessaries of Life, and his Blessing with them; and also that he would give us Grace to be, and to continue righteous and good People, otherwise the Necessaries of Life will do us no good in the End. — (*and forgive us our Trespases*) or our faults and failings in that Duty; as well as our actual Sins and Omissions. — (*as we forgive them that trespass against us*) we do forgive them and therefore do hope that he will be merciful and forgive us. — (*and lead us not into Temptation*) or suffer us not to fall into Straits and Dangers, which may turn us aside to do the thing which is unjust and evil; or not to do the Thing that is right and good. — (*but deliver us from Evil*) or keep us from afflictions, which will be grievous and hard for us to bear; and also from Sin and Iniquity, and from Inducements to it; as from Suggestions and Delusions of Satan; from our own natural desires; from the Flattery or Reproach of common Men; from the inticements of Peace and Prosperity; from the hardship and trouble of Adversity; and from every thing else that would draw us, or would drive us to an action that is evil or not good. — (*for thine is the Kingdom*) it is a righteous Kingdom, and they are good People only, that he graciously governs. — (*and the Power*) he only is able to save his People from oppressing Troubles, and from Iniquity, and from the prevalency of the Temptations to which they are exposed: He only is able, and he will reward them for their Patience and Self-denial, which they bear in righteous Duty. — (*and the Glory*) he is worthy of the highest Esteem, and Reverence, and Praise for that his commands are righteous, and do make for the good of the Society, and of the publick State, and for the benefit and comfort of every good Person of it; and not for the selfish desire of any single Person: He
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does not think, that it will much set forth his Goodness and be for his Glory to bear long with any one, who will have his own private desire against his command, and the laws of his Kingdom, and against the good Duty that he ought to do. — (for ever and ever.) such a righteous Kingdom and State, and such good People he always had, and does desire, and always will have. — At the end we repeat our sense and desire, with as much or more earnestness as before; and to each foregoing expression, as it were, we say *Amen*. Thus we are taught and bid to Pray.

If we desire a better sense and mind for righteous Duty to others, and do pray heartily for it, and do use means to obtain it; it may be hoped that God will hear our prayers and bless our endeavours, and will work that sense and mind in us. 1 *John*. v. 14. *If we ask any thing according to his Will, he heareth us.* 1 *John*. iii. 22. 23. *Whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing in his sight: And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another as he gave us commandment.* 1 *Peter* iii. 12. *The eyes of the Lord are over the Righteous and his ears are open unto their prayers.* *Jam*. i. 5. *If any Man lack Wisdom, let him ask of God; that giveth to all Men Liberality, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.* The discretion and sense to do that which is righteous and good, is the true Wisdom which St. *James* meant; and God will give it to them who heartily desire it. *Jam*. v. 16. *The effectual fervent Prayer of a righteous Man availeth much.* He cannot pray fervently for any thing that is not righteous or tending to it; nor for the recovery of the sick Man, but as he may live to the good of others. *Rom*. x. 13. *Whoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved.* This is spoken and intended of those good People, whether they were Jews or Gentiles, who did believe righteous Duty to others to be the mind and will of God; and accordingly were faithful in it, and did hope in him upon it; they would be saved. Christ says *John* xv. 16. and *John* xvi. 23. *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name he will give it you.* *John* xiv. 13. *Whatsoever ye shall ask in my Name that*
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will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son Matth. xviii, 20, *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them.* Christ seems to mean by his Name, some work of Righteousness, which is for the good of others, and which Christ commands; if it be prayed for, that it may be truly done, it is prayed for in his Name; since it is answering to his Mind, and is the work that he would have to be done. Christ exhorts, Matth. vii. 7. *Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you.* for ver. 11. *If ye being Evil, know how to give good Gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good Things* (or as it is, Luke xi. 13 *give the Holy Spirit*) *to them that ask him.* The Doctrines and Duties of Love and Goodness, as the knowledge of the Mind and Nature of God, the Belief and Sense of the Faith which Christ taught, a Mind and Heart for Justice Equity and human Duty, a greater Care and Esteem for it, than for outward Enjoyments, an Ability to restrain natural Evil Desires and Passions, Self-denial, Moderation, Patience, &c. for the good of others; these are some of the good Things, which the Holy Spirit instructs People in, and inspires them with; and which God sees it to be fittest to give to his Children: They are of much greater worth, than the good Things of Life and Sense are: And if Men can give Food, Clothing, and other Conveniences to their Children: God whose Goodness is much greater than the Goodness of all Men together, will certainly give those good Things to them, who do indeed desire them.

But it is likely that some People do not much desire these Righteous and good Things, which would make them Christians, and dispose them to be Helpful to the Poor, and to live to the good of others; they rather desire, that God would keep them from Losses and Troubles and Sicknes, and would prosper their Labours and Endeavours, and would increase their Means and Substance; that they might not be straitened in their Selfish-desires, nor hindered from their private Designs, nor abated in their delicious Eating

and Drinking, nor be restrained from their Recreations and Delights; but that they may enjoy themselves, and live to their own Content- This seems to be in the Bottom of the Heart of some People, though they do not speak it out plainly before God. *St. James* blames them, *Jam. iv. 3. Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss. that ye may Consume it upon your Lusts.*

It is not much to be expected, that God should willingly, out of Love to us, give us the good Things, which should make us Rich and Full Men, when we do not desire the good Things, which should make us Righteous and Good Men; or that he should increase our Wealth and Substance, when we do not intend to do good with it, but to have it to our selves, and to have our Pleasures and Purposes from it; or that he should supply our needless Desires, when we are not willing to help or supply the real Needs and Wants of the Poor; or that he should save and keep us from Afflictions, when we have no Pity for the Afflicted, but do unconcernedly suffer and make them to bear their Afflictions and Hardships as they can; or that he should uphold our Condition, and continue our Means to us, when nobody is no better for it, but we ourselves, and our Children and our near Friends; or that he should Forgive us, when we will not Forgive our Neighbours. God does not account us to be his People because we Worship him. and hope in his Mercy through Christ, when we have not the Love and Goodness of his People in us; nor does he think us to be his Children, whilst we are unlike to him. and have little of his gracious Mind and Nature in us. Christ says indeed, *Luke vi. 35. That he is kind to the Unthankfull and to the Evil.* He may give means and the conveniences of Life for a time, to let us see; that he is merciful and good. and would have us to take Example and learn from him, to be merciful and good to others, as he is to us: But if we are not so; the means in the end, will make it plainly to appear, that our Punishment is just and deserved, since we had wherewith to do some good; but we had not the Belief and Heart to do it; nor did we much desire it, or pray to him for it.

If we believe and know, that Love and Mercy
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and Goodness to others, is our great Duty, and is the Command of God, and is pleasing to him above all Things; and if it be our hearty desire and prayer to him, to dispose and enable us for it, against the Desires and Temptations and Troubles, that may oppose it; then we may hope that he will hear us, and will help us to become Righteous and Good People as we ought to be, and as he desires we should be. And then we may hope also that our other Wants shall be supplied, and the necessities of Life shall be given us.

Matth. vi. 33. Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness; and all these Things shall be added unto you.

4. The Gospel was writ that it might be read and heard; it was given to the Church, that it might Teach us the knowledge of the Mind and Will of God, and might instruct us in the Truth, and in good and righteous Duty which might be pleasing to him: That Men might not be left to their own weak Judgment and foolish Conceits, to serve him mostly in things that effect and please themselves; thinking that they must therefore be pleasing and good before him; it is the great work of Ministers, to study it, and to teach it, and to persuade to the Duty commanded in it, and to keep up the Remembrance and sense of things in People.

Love and Goodness to others is the great Duty of the Gospel, upon which People will be saved. But against it some Men may object and say, *That the Works of it are deeds of the Law, by which no Man shall be justified in the Sight of God, Rom. iii. 20. Gal iii. 11.* But they are not so; they are not the Circumcision, the Sacrifices, the Purifications, or any of the other Rites, which the Apostle meant by the Deeds of the Law. They are the Duties which Christ has commanded; and to be faithful in them, is to believe in him; it is the Faith to which Justification is promised. Or the Men may say, that Love to others is a different Duty, and is an inferiour and lesser Grace, than the Love of God and Faith in Christ is, which are the principal and necessary Duties of the Gospel; ——— but there is not much difference between them. For the Love of God is the Love of the Goodness, which God would have shewed

and done to others, which Christ teaches and commands; and to be hearty and conscientious in it, is to have those great Graces of the Gospel, the love of God and faith in Christ in us.

Or the Men may say, that Love to others is very commendable before Men, it makes a Man to deserve to be well thought of, and well spoken of; but it does not much concern his Justification, which is to be by the pure Mercy of God for Christ's Sake, independant from the Works and Duties which the Man has done. — but it may be considered, that Love to others; puts the Man into higher Esteem and Favour with God than it does with Men; it shews that he has the divine Nature in him, and is a true Child of God, and a Brother of Christ: it pleases God better, and does more towards Acception and Mercy with him and towards the Man's Justification, than any or all his other Faith and Duty does.

Or the Men may object that of the Apostle, 1 Cor, xiii. 3. *Though I bestow all my Goods to feed the Poor, and though I give my Body to be burned, and have not Charity, it profiteth me Nothing.* — It may be answered, that by Charity is meant Love and Goodness to others. If a Man has not that Love in him, though he should bestow his Goods upon the Poor of his own profession, and though he should suffer the worst he can suffer, and that for God in respect and Duty to him; yet God will not and cannot like well of him.

It is possible for a Man to believe heartily that one thing or another is the Mind of God, and is best pleasing to him, which is not so of itself; the Jews thought the Rites of their Law, and the Traditions of their Elders were so; the Antimonians think, that the trusting upon the Redemption of Christ, wholly and only without Works and Duties is so; and it is possible for the Man to suffer the loss of his Goods and of his Life, for that his erroneous belief, and to have much hope of favour with God for it; yea if he has not a Love to Goodness, and a Mind and Heart to do the Thing that is right and good to others for Goodness Sake; but can allow himself to forbear and neglect the Duty, (unless it be to those of his own Profession) and perhaps to act against

against it; if it opposes his Belief, thinking it to be of little value with God comparatively; such a Man, though he be a sufferer, will not at last have the acceptance and favour with God that he may expect and hope to have.

Men who have the belief and sense of Love and Goodness to others; will see that such Objections are of no force against the Duty; the Doctrines upon which they may be grounded do not so much shew the Grace and Mercy of God and Christ, and set forth his Glory, as that Duty does. *Matth. v. 17. Christ came not to Destroy but to fulfil the Law. Rom. xiii. 10. Love is the fulfilling of the Law. 1 Tim. i. 5. Charity is the end of the Commandment.* They will see that that Law and Love and Charity, intends that Duty, and does more plainly speak it to be the Sense of the whole Gospel, than any thing that may be devised, does contradict it. They will perceive that it is intended in some Places, where perhaps it is not expressly mentioned.

Christ came to call Sinners to Repentance, Matth. ix. 13. and declared, *Except ye Repent ye shall perish. Luke xiii. 3.* He admonished People to forbear their own Desires and to be Merciful and Good and Righteous to the Poor and to others, or they would perish; for that was the Repentance which he was sent to call them unto. He warned them, *Luke xxi. 34. To take heed to themselves, lest their Hearts be overcharged with Surfeiting and Drunkenness and Cares of this Life, and so that Day come upon them unawares.* Sensual and careless People will neglect the good Duty which they ought to do to others, that they may have the more full Satisfaction to themselves, and they will be Condemned for it. *Luke vi. 24. 25. Wo unto you that are Rich, for ye have received your Consolation. Wo unto you that are Full, for ye shall Hunger. Wo unto you that Laugh now, for ye shall Morn and Weep. To have their own Selfish-desires, Is the Broad way that much People go in, and it leads to Destruction. Matth. vii. 13.* But if it was the right Hand that with-held them from the Duty which they ought to do to others, it were better to cut it off, than to be cast into Hell. *Matth. v. 30. For what is a Man profited, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul.*

Soul. Matth. xvi. 26. By and for the want of the good Duty he ought to do.

Matth. v. 25. 26. *Agree with thine Adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him, lest at any time the Adversary deliver thee to the Judge, and the Judge deliver thee to the Officer, and thou be cast into Prison: Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost Farthing.* By the Adversary is, or may be meant the Poor Man; the difference between thee and him, lies between Justice and Equity, or between Law and Duty; thou pleadest or thinkest, that thou doest not owe him any Thing in Justice or by the Laws of the Land: He pleads and thinks, (or his Poverty pleads for him and in effect says) that thou doest owe him Relief and Help for he needs it by Equity and Duty and the Law of God: And Christ advises and warns thee to relieve and help him, and that quickly; or the Judge will Condemn thee for a wrong doer; and then it will be grievous and sad with thee indeed.

Matth. vii. 3. *Why beholdest thou the Mote that is thy Brother's Eye, but considerest not the Beam that is in thine own Eye.* Thy Neighbour it may be, has done an ill Thing against thee, and thou art angry with him for it, and thinkest it a very great Fault, for which he ought to be punished and made to suffer. And thou thy self hast been hard and unmerciful, if not to him yet to other poor Neighbours; thou hast made them to bear Want and Misery almost continually; thou hast seldom Helped them as thou shouldest have done; thy Mind has been to solace thy self, and to indulge thine own Desires; the hurt which thine Unrighteousness has caused to them, is much greater, than the hurt which thy Neighbour has done unto thee; and therefore thine anger against him, may justly provoke the anger of God against thy self.

Matth. vi. 20. 21. *Lay up for yourselves Treasure in Heaven, where neither Moth nor Rust doth Corrupt; and where Thieves do not break thro' and Steal, for where your Treasure is, there will your Hearts be also.* Or be Merciful, Righteous and Good to the Poor, and to others, (for Christ came to persuade People to be so:) Believe and know assuredly, that is the Duty which

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pleases God; let your Heart be set more upon it, than upon any Earthly enjoyment; it is the certain way of storing up for your selves a Treasure above; which you will have great need of, and which will do you much good afterwards.

Mark iv. 24. Take heed what you hear: With what Measure ye mete it shall be Measured to you again. People have hope from their Faith and Duty; they do heartily imbrace the Doctrines of the Gospel; they are humble, devout, reverend, and frequent in the duties of Piety and Worship; they are innocent, gentle patient moderate, a ove what many others are; they are told and taught, that they shall have peace with God from such Belief: But if they are unmerciful and unrighteous to the Poor and to others; Christ says it will not be so; he will do to them as they have done; with what Measure ye meat, it shall be measured to you again.

Gal. 5. 9. A little leaven leaveneth the whole Lump. A Doctrine, a way of Worship, an inward affection and sense, if it be held to be equally needful and good with righteous Duty, it will abate the Belief of the excellency of it; and will give the Man leave too much to neglect it; and yet to hope that still he is acceptable with God. and shall be saved

1 *John. iv. 1. Oc Believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they be of God: because many false Prophets are gone out into the World: Hereby know ye the Spirit of God; every Spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh, is of God. And every Spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh, is not of God &c.* By the Spirit may be understood, the perswasion and judgement of Men, who teach the Duty which they think God is pleased with. And by confessing that Christ is come in the Flesh, may be understood, the believing that the Love and Mercy, and righteous and good Duty to others, which Christ came to teach and to perswade People unto, is indeed the command and will of God, and is the great and principal Duty, which he requires before and above all other Duty. He that believeth it to be so, and is renewed to it, he is of God, he has something of the mind and nature of God in him; he is accepted and beloved of God. But he that does not believe

believe it to be so, but thinks it to be a mean and common Duty. and that something else is more pleasing to God; he is not of God, he has not the mind the grace and love of God in him; and God will not own him for one of his People. If those Men do not teach this Duty as principally good and necessary, they then do not teach as Christ did, they are not his true Ministers. ver. 6. *Hereby know we the Spirit of Truth and the Spirit of Errors.* But what ever such Men may think or teach, let us be careful of the Duty, and do the thing that is right and good to others; so we shall please God, and shew that we are his Children, and have some true knowledge of him in us. ver. 7. 8. *Let us, love one another, for Love is of God; every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God; he that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love.*

Gal. i. 8. Though we, or an Angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. If the Preacher is learned and understands much Mystery; if he is full of Texts and Scripture-expressions, and is holy or spiritual in Expounding them; if he is eloquent and ready to speak his sense of Things plainly and fully; yet if he teaches any Thing else, as better pleasing to God than righteous Duty to others is; he then destroys or perverts the Faith and the Gospel of Christ, and ought to be rejected and not observed.

It is said, that *Christ is the end of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth.* Rom. x. 4. *That there is none other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby, they must be saved.* Acts. iv. 12. *The Apostle prayed) That Christ may dwell in your Hearts by Faith.* Eph. iii. 17. In these and many such Scriptures, by Christ may be understood, the Love and Mercy and good Duty to others, which he taught and commanded. It will be accounted to People for the fulfilling of the Law; it will make them righteous People, such as God will be pleased to save; and no other Work or Duty will do so: It is then very needful and good, (as the Apostle prayed) that they should have the sense of it in them, and be Hearty and Consciencious in it.

It is said, that *Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ.* John.

John. i. 17. That by Grace ye are saved. Eph. 2. 8. That Election is of Grace, Rom. xi. 5. By that Grace may be understood, the Grace, or the Love and Mercy and Goodness, which is renewed in People towards others, as well as the Grace and Mercy which is in God whereby they will be saved.

Great things are spoken of Faith or Believing. *He that Believeth shall be saved, he that Believeth not shall be damned. Mark. xvi. 16. It is the Work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. John. vi. 29. Faith purifieth the Heart. Acts. xv. 9. It overcometh the World. 1. John. v. 4. It quenbeth the fiery Darts of the Wicked. Eph. vi. 16. Without Faith it is impossible to please God. Hebr. xi. 6. The want of it in the Jews, was the cause of their Rejection. Rom. ix. 32. By Faith or Believing may be understood, Love and Mercy, good and righteous Duty to others; he who is perswaded that it is the Mind of God, and the Command of Christ above all Things else, and accordingly is hearty, faithful and effectual in it; he is the believer, he has the Faith which is meant and intended in those Scriptures.*

Hebr. xi. 1. Faith is the Substance of Things hoped for, the Evidence of Things not seen. It was the wish and desire of People, who had a sense of Love and Goodness in them; that (Psa. lxxxv. 10. 11.) Mercy and Truth might meet together; that Righteousness and Peace might kiss each other; that Truth might spring out of the Earth, and Righteousness might look down from Heaven, That (Psa. lxxvii. 2.) the way of God might be known upon Earth, and his Saving-health among all Nations. They did desire and wish, that all Men were harmless, true, peaceable, human, that Justice and Equity were the principal disposition of their Hearts, and rule of their Doings: And they did hope that God of his goodness, would give them means to become such just and good Men, as it was wished they were.

The Love and Goodness to others, which Christ has taught and commanded by the grace and help of his Spirit, makes those who are perswaded and converted to it, righteous and good People, in a much higher degree than Men commonly were, either

among the Gentiles or the Jews: That Love and Goodness in true Christian People, is the substance of Things hoped for, and is the evidence of Things not seen. *Hebr. xi. 2.* By it the Elders obtained a good Report. They did deserve it; they were well spoken of, perhaps even by them who had not much of their Goodness in them.

Rom. ix. 11. &c. The Children being not yet Born, neither having done any Good or Evil that the purpose of God according to Election might stand, not of Works, but of him that calleth: It was said unto her: The Elder shall serve the Younger. As it is written: *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.* The Apostle speaks here of two People, who were typified by the Children, and mentioned to the Mother. *Gen. xxv. 23.* The Lord said unto her, Two Nations are in thy Womb, and two manner of People shall be separated from thy Bowels; and the one People shall be stronger than the other People; and the Elder shall serve the Younger. The Israelites or the Jews were the elder or former People; and the Christians were the younger or latter People. Before either of them were in being, or had done God any service, it was his mind, his Purpose and Election, to have for his People and to save; not them, whose care was to serve him in Ordinances and Worship, as the Jews did; but them, whose care was to be Righteous and Good to others, as he commanded and called them to be. The elder served the younger People so far, as to give them some knowledge of God, and some perception of what was not, and of what was good and pleasing to him. God shewed Mercies, and executed Judgments upon the elder People the Jews; he called upon them to be Good to others by the Prophets, and by Christ and the Apostles; he cast them off and Destroyed them for not obeying that, his call; he took the obedient Gentiles to him, to be his People instead of them. And from his dealings with them, the younger People the Christians may observe and learn, that God always did, and always will, love or like Righteous and Good Persons, as Jacob seems to have been, who was a plain Man dwelling in Tents: And that he always did, and always will, hate or dislike selfish Persons

Persons, who will have their Prey, or their own mind, and are some times cunning Hunters for it, as Esau seems to have been. *Gen. xxv. 27.* It is true, that the most righteous Persons do not deserve Favour from him, for the Good which they do to others, is from his Blessing and Grace, and their Life and Conveniencies are much more than a Compensation for it; but God is gracious in himself, and therefore is inclined from his own Mind and Nature to be Favourable to such Persons, to have them for his People, and to forgive and save them. *Rom. ix. 16* *It is not of him that Willeth, nor of him that Runneth, but of God that sheweth Mercy.*

Rom. viii. 29. *Whom he did fore-know, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the Image of his Son.* Or whom he saw, that they would be perswaded and converted to it, he did intend that they should become innocent meek, peaceable, patient, forgiving, loving and merciful, righteous and good in some degree as Christ was. And *ver. 30.* *Whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified them he also glorified.* He called them, or he caused his Command, his Mind and Will to be made known to them. He justified them, or he promised Forgiveness, and Mercy, and Grace to them, and comforted and strengthened them with the hopes of it. He glorified them, or he looked upon them as Glories and Lights in his Church, as chief and eminent above others, as examples and patterns for them to imitate and follow, as his especial beloved People as worthy of esteem and respect, how meanly soever common Men did think of them.

Eph. i. 4 *He hath chosen us in Christ, before the Foundation of the World, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love.* God ever was gracious, loving, and good in his Heart and Nature; and therefore before the Foundation of the World, even from Eternity, it always was his mind and desire to have People like unto himself, or to have them to be loving and merciful, righteous and good to others as he is; whereby they will be such as he can own and have for his Children, and can have the esteem and love of a Father for them. *This is his intention in chusing them, or in admitting*
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them into the Church of Christ, and in causing his Mind and the Gospel to be revealed and made known to them *viz.* That by his Inspiration and Grace, they might be made truly and heartily good People.

In some such manner as this, Men who have the sense of righteous Duty in them, will take and interpret such Texts of the Gospel as these; and will perceive that the Duty is intended in many places, where perhaps it is not expressly mentioned; which do declare the acceptableness of it, or do exhort to it, or do shew the necessity of it, or do reprove the neglect of it, or do warn against Things that are evil and sinful in themselves, or that will hinder the Duty, and make People remiss and negligent in it; they will perceive and see, that it is principally taught and commanded in the Gospel; they will understand the fore-knowledge, the purpose, the predestination, the election, &c. of God, to be his eternal Mind and Will, that People should be Righteous and Good to others; and that being so, they shall be saved. All Things in the Gospel will help to increase and strengthen their Belief and Care of the Duty, and their hope in God for Mercy and Life upon it.

These Ordinances before spoken of, *viz.* Baptism, the Lord's-Supper, Prayer, and reading the Gospel have Love and Mercy and Goodness to others, for the end and intent of them; they are acceptable Services, as they make us more diligent and conscientious therein, and more Righteous and Good to others. By the sincere and due observation of these ordinances, we may hope that we shall have the Grace and Spirit of God, to be in us, and to remain and abide in us; to remember and mind us of that Duty, to revive and increase the sense of it; to excite and perswade us to it; to comfort us upon it; to continue us faithful in it; and then God will be inclined from his own Goodness for Christ's Sake, to forgive, and accept and save us.

C H A P. XX.

*Love and Goodness to others, is the Work
and Duty that does indeed please God.*

To do no Hurt or Wrong to another, is a natural Duty; the Mind and common Sense of People tells them that it is so; the Heathen thought it to be unhuman, and contrary to the Heart and Nature of Man, and to be a Thing Evil in itself; for any one to do Hurt unto, or to Wrong an innocent Person: It is as necessary as it is that a Man should be innocent, and not liable to the punishment which an unjust or evil Action deserves; it is a Part but not the whole of the Christian Duty; it is Duty to do no Evil, no Hurt, no Wrong; it is a greater and a better Duty to be good; bare Innocency and Justice, implies the not doing of Hurt; and as another is not bettered by it; so the Man saves himself, and is not the worse for it: Love, and Mercy. and Righteousness, implies the doing of some Good; the Man denies himself, and is the worse for it, that another may be bettered and benefited by it. This is the great Duty of the Gospel, and of the whole word of God; but all Men have not that belief of it, and but few and imperfect Works of it, will be done by them who have but a low and indifferent belief of it; they may do so much in it, as the Law would constrain them; and as must be done for their own Peace and Quiet; or so much as the example of their Neighbours persuades, and as must be done for their Credit and Reputation; but they will seldom do it, as Christ advises, *Matth. vi. 3. So as not to let the left Hand know what the right Hand doeth*; or so as to do it without some outward Motive, freely from themselves, from a love to it for Goodness sake, or for the good and benefit of another; it is something else that gives them Comfort and hope of Peace and Mercy with God.

Some Men have a fair outward Carriage; they are innocent and peaceable to those about them; they are ready to help them, if it may be done without Charge or Trouble; they speak to please and not to offend;

offend; they are seldom very passionate, if things are not done to their Mind; they are free, and ready to requite their Friends and Neighbours, who have entertained them; they would seem to have more good Nature than many of their equals, and to be like to Men of an higher quality. But perhaps there is not much Duty and Goodness in them; It may be, that those about them are peaceable and helpful to them; or that they are but little Things, which are some times done against their Mind; or that there is as much self-pleasing Delight, as there is Gratitude or Justice in treating their Friends; or that it is in outward Civility, in which they would excell others. It is a better and more necessary Duty, that they have an Heart and Mind for Love, and Mercy, and Goodness, and do help the Poor as they are enabled: This Duty especially does shew that Men are Righteous and Good Men; a fair civil Carriage does not shew them to be so in the sight and esteem of God: there is but little Self-denial in it; and if others are not the worse, they are not much the better for it. 1. *John. iii. 18. Let us not love in Word, neither in Tongue, but in Deed and in Truth. Luke vi. 32. &c. If ye love them which love you, what Thank have ye? for Sinners also love those that love them: And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what Thank have ye? for Sinners also do even the same: and if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what Thank have ye? for Sinners also lend to Sinners to receive as much again. Luke xiv. 12 &c. When thou makest a Dinner or a Supper, call not thy Friends, nor thy Brethren, nor thy Kinsmen, nor thy rich Neighbours, lest they also bid thee again and a recompence be made thee: But when thou makest a Feast, call the Poor, the Mimed, the Lame, the Blind; and thou shalt be Blessed, for they cannot recompence thee; for thou shalt be recompenced at the Resurrection of the Just.*

Some Men take care to pay their Debts, they pay for the provisions of Life, for that which they buy for their use, or to sell again; for that which they hire; for the service of Labourers and Work-men; their charges in the Officers rate; they pay for all Things, for which if they did not pay, the Law would compell them to do it: And in so doing they think, that they

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are Just and Good Men. *That they do to others as they would be done unto: Matth. vii. 12. That they owe no Man any Thing. Rom. xiii. 8. That they can in some sense say as the Apostle did, 2 Cor. vii. 2. We have wronged no Man: we have defrauded no Man. But they have where with to make these Payments; they do not deny themselves to do it, for they have something more which they keep to themselves, as if it was given them for their own use; they do not relieve and help the Poor, as they are enabled to do, or they do but little in it; they cannot truly say that they do to them, as they would be done unto; or that they owe them nothing. It may be feared, that God does not approve of them, and think them to be Just and Good Men, though they do make necessary Payments, and are legally Just.*

Some Men are diligent and industrious in the Work which God has given them to do, and hath fitted them with Skill and Strength for it; it is his Command that they should be diligent in it, *Exod. xx. 9. Six Days shalt thou Labour, and do all thy Work.* They do not allow themselves much Cessation and Liberty from it, and spend much of their time upon other needless Diversions. It is profitable to some others, as well as themselves, who have their Conveniences the better supplied by their care and diligence in it. It was one of the Commands, which the Apostle gave in charge to the *Thessalonians*, and spoke of it as commendable and profitable. *1 Thess. iv. 2. To know what Commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. And (ver. 11. 12.) that ye study to be Quiet and do your own Business, and to work with your own Hands (as we commanded you) that ye may walk Honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of Nothing.* But if those Men use and spend upon their Desires and Designs, as well as upon their Necessities, that which they Justly and Labouriously earn, thinking they are allowed to do so, and do not help the Poor in their Need, when they have where with to do it; they then shew, that they have more Mind to please themselves, and to have their own Desires than they have to please Christ, and to fulfill his Mind and Will; they shew that they work for their own Profit, that they may be full Men; and not for him

him or not to help the Poor, and to be Christian and good Men, as he would have them to do. *Eph. iv. 28. Let the Man Labour, working with his Hands the Thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.* It is not his labouring and working alone, but his giving from his Earning to the relief of the Poor and Needy, that makes him a Christian Man, who may hope to be saved. So *St. Paul* shewed and taught the *Ephesians* to do. *Act. xx. 34. 35. Tea, you your selves know that these Hands have Ministered to my Necessities, and to them that were with me. I have shewed you all Things, how that so Labouring, ye ought to support the Weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, it is more blessed to Give than to Receive.*

Some Men are Temperate; they do not Eat and Drink to gratify the Appetite, and for the Pleasure of it; but for their Health, and to renew their Spirit and Strength, and to fit them for the Work which they have to do: They do not go beyond the usual measure in it, which Nature may well digest and bear; they content themselves with common Provision, and seldom feed Deliciously: If they have means for it, they chuse rather to restrain their Appetite, than to spend what they have to spare upon Luxury; knowing and remembering, that Intemperance, or the being given to eating and Drinking is sensual, and is sinful and dangerous. *Luk. xxi. 34. Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your Hearts be over-charged with Surfeiting and Drunkenness. Rom. viii. 6. To be carnally Minded is Death. ver. 13. If ye live after the Flesh ye shall die. 1 Cor. vi. 13. Meats for the Belly, and the Belly for Meats, but God shall destroy both it and them.* The Apostle lamented at the lost condition of some amongst the *Philipians* *iii. 18. 19. For that their God was their Belly, and their Glory was their shame; and they minded Earthly Things.* Men that love Eating and Drinking have a sensual Heart in them, and will be much inclined to it, and much of their Means will be spent upon their luxurious Pleasures, which should help to relieve the Poor. There is but little hope that they will be saved.

And on the other side, if Men do not live deliciously and sumptuously; yet if they keep to themselves that
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which they save by their Temperance, and do not supply the Wants of the Poor and Needy as they might do; they then do not do the great Duty of the Gospel, and will scarce be thought worthy of Acceptance and Mercy from God. *Rom. xiii. 14. Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the Flesh to fulfil the Lust thereof.* The making no such Provision is necessary, but is not enough; we must put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and must shew Mercy and Goodness to the Poor and to others, as he commanded, that we may be indeed his People. Christ says, *Matth. xvi. 24. If any Man will come after me, let him deny himself, and follow me.* He must restrain his sensual Desires, and his selfish-present Designs, and he must be Good as Christ taught and shewed, for this especially is to follow him. The Pharisee could say, he Fasted twice in the Week, (*Luk. xviii. 12.*) and but few Men can say so; he did it in Respect and Duty to God; but he did not feed the Hungred with that which he saved by Fasting; and he was no more justified than the *Publican* was

Some Men save for their Children; and do desire to provide for more than their conveniences, even for their Advancement, and to make them Masters, or the greater Men among their Neighbours; the Apostle speaks it as a common Thing for Men to do so, *2 Cor. xii. 14. The Children ought not to lay up for the Parents, but the Parents for the Children.* And he says (but it is in another sense; it is to shew the Necessity and Duty of Relieving poor Parents, if there be an ability for it) *1 Tim. v. 8. If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own House, he hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel.* But this is not the only Duty that is required: The Wants of the Poor ought to be supplied; and Men that provide for the plentiful Subsistence of their Children, have wherewith to do it, and if they did do it, their Children might not be the worse for it, though they had the less given them; they might be Blessed and Prospered for the Good which their Fathers have done. *Psal. xxxvii. 25. 26. I have been Young and now am Old, yet have I not seen the Righteous forsaken, nor his Seed begging Bread. : He is ever Merciful and Lendeth; and his Seed is Blessed.* But if such

Men do not help to supply the Wants of the Poor, they may be good Fathers to their Children, but they are not Righteous Men : The great Duty of the Gospel is not done; God and Christ are disobeyed; and it may be feared that they will not be saved. Christ says, *Luk. xiv. 26. If any Man come to me, and hate not his Father, and Mother, and Wife, and Children, and Brethren, and Sisters, yea, and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple.* [and haterh not &c.] or has not more mind to help the Poor in their need for God and Goodness sake, than he has to benefit any of these near Friends, but for their sakes omits the Duty, or does but little in it; he is not a true Disciple of Christ, and will scarcely be saved.

Some Men have a Reverence for God; they believe and know, that he is present with them at all times, and sees their inward Thoughts and Desires, and is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity; that it is from his Goodness, that they are kept from Sorrows and Troubles, and have some comfort of Life continued to them; that they cannot do their Duty truly and well, without the help of his Spirit; that his free Grace and Mercy through Christ must justify and save them: Therefore they serve and worship him with Fear and Reverence, and pray unto him Devoutly, and read and hear Attentively, and keep his Day Religiously, and observe the Ordinances heartily and humbly; they shew an awful Respect for God, and do put some others in mind of the Fear they ought to have of him, and of their Dependance upon him, and of the need they have of his Peace, and Blessing, and Mercy. But a reverent and devout Worship is not all the Duty that God would have; his desire is, that the Poor be helped and supplied; he has more Concern for them, than he has for greater Persons; he would have the Ordinances of Religion to be means and motives to Men, to shew the Respect and Obedience which they owe to him, in supplying their Wants; he would be pleased to see it to be well done; or to see that Men are ready and disposed for it; and have the like Mind in them, as his People, his Saints, and his Angels have in them, and he has in himself. But if Men do not help the
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Poor in their Need as they might and should do; they then shew, that they have more regard and care for themselves and for their own Desires, than they have to his command, and to the good Duty that he would have done; and he does not think himself duly Worshiped and served by them. *Joh. iv. 24. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in Truth.* Or with an Heart and Mind for Love, and Mercy, and Goodness to others; for that is the Spirit of his People, that is the true and right Duty which will please him, that is the Temper of his Mind; and he will not be pleased with, nor accept of any Worship or Service from them, who have not that Heart and Mind in them. *Matth. vii. 21. Not every one that saith unto me Lord. Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven.* The Will of the Father is, that a Man has a disposed faithful Heart to help the Poor, and does help them as he can; he shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. *Matth. v. 20. Except your Righteousness shall exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* The Scribes and Pharisees were very careful and conscientious of the Service and Worship of God, as it was commanded them in the Law; and few Men do now or can exceed them in that Duty: But it is not the Worship of God, but Justice, Equity, Love, Mercy, and Goodness to others, that is intended by Righteousness; and except a Man does Good to the Poor and to others more Faithfully and Effectually than they did, he will not be thought to be a good Christian, or to be worthy of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Some Men are *Dissenters*; they think that God is concerned about his Worship, and that it is his Honour, and that he will not have any Thing done in it, for which there is not some command or example in his Word. *Deut. iv. 2. Ye shall not add unto the Words that I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it. Deut. v. 32. Thou shalt not Turn aside to the Right Hand or to the Left. Deut. xii, 32. What Thing soever I command you, observe to do it; thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it. 2. Cor. vi. 17. Come ye out from among them, and be ye*

separate, and I will receive you. Such admonitions which were given against the Idolatry and Wickednesses of the Heathen, those Men apply against the orders for the Worship of the true GOD of Heaven and Earth; which the Government, under which they Live quietly and safely has appointed; and that too, for the Edification of People; and to continue and increase Love, and Peace, and Unity amongst them; as the Apostle wished and prayed, *Rom. xv. 6. That they may with one Mind and one Mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* This Love, and Peace, and Unity amongst People, is agreeable to the Mind and Nature of God, and is much better in his Sight, than are the separate ways of Worship, whereby such Men serve him, and think to please him.

Again some very material Doctrines, as the depravity, the sin, the misery of natural People, as the insufficiency of the good Works of regenerated People, as that they are but deeds of the Law, by which no Man shall be justified, as the all-sufficiency of the Work of Christ, as the Trusting and Believing in him, to which Justification and Life is promised: These and such Doctrines some dissenting Men think are taught more principally and fully by Teachers at the Meeting, than they are by Church Ministers; and by the knowledge and sense of them, they think that they are farther removed from the Ignorance of the Heathen, and from the Idolatry, Superstition, and Merit of the Papists, than Church People are, and are set forward in the way to Life; they give to God and Christ the whole Glory of the Life which they hope for, and do confess that in and of themselves, they have not any Thing that is or can be acceptable and pleasing to him. But in answer to these Things, it may be considered, That the selfish Disposition, or the want of Love and Goodness to others, is the great Depravity and Sin in most People; that the good Works of the Regenerated although they do not deserve Salvation, yet God is pleased of his own Goodness to save them; that Sacrifices and Purifications, and the abstaining from Things forbidden, and other indifferent Rites, formerly commanded, and not good Duties to others, were the Deeds of

of the Law, by which no Man could be justified; that the believing Good and Righteous Duty to others, to be the Will and Command of God, which Christ was sent to Convert People unto, and not the trusting upon his Redemption, is the Believing in him, to which everlasting Life is promised. And if they confess that their Heart and Nature is depraved Evil and Sinful in the General; and that their best Duties are imperfect and cannot be accepted of themselves; and if they do Trust wholly upon Christ, and do own and acknowledge it, that it is the free and undeserved Mercy of God to pardon and save them; yet what Good does this Confession and Belief do? who is the better for it? the Poor are but poorly Helped from it; it suggesteth to them to think, that the Helping them makes no more to their Justification than other Duties (which are but Duties of the Means, and are not pleasing to God of themselves) do make, *1 Cor. xiii. 3. Though I bestow all my Goods to feed the Poor, and though I give my Body to be burned and have not Charity, it Profiteth me nothing.* By Charity the Apostle meant a Love to Goodness, an Heart and Mind to help the Poor in their Need, for their Benefit and Comfort, and for Goodness and Mercy's-Sake; for this is the great Duty of the Gospel, which Christ was sent to perswade and convert People unto; and without it nothing that a Man may or can do, will be accepted to his Salvation. By Charity the Apostle did not mean a Love to God and Christ, from an assured Hope and Trust that he will save them; for Christ will not own People to be Believers in him because they trust wholly upon him; and God does not think much the better of them, because they own it to be of his Mercy alone to forgive and save them, when they have but little Goodness to others, and but little of his gracious Mind in them.

Again some Dissenting-Men may say, that good Works and good Life will follow from an hearty Trust and Belief in Christ. But in answer hereunto, it may be considered, that there are other Things which may be called good Works, and parts of a good Life besides helping the Poor: For Instance, they may be constant in the Worship of God, and pray much unto him, and have

have him much in their Thoughts, and speak of him with Reverence and Fear, and spend his Day Soberly and Piously, and read and hear much, and be submissive and patient under Afflictions and Troubles; they may be temperate, industrious, harmless, civil, and legally Just; they may forbear Profoundness, Excess, and Pleasure, which some Persons give themselves too much Liberty in: These Things may be called good Works, and such a Life a good Life; they help to make Men to be good Men, or at least not to be bad Men. It is further required, that they should be Merciful and Good, and Helpful to the Poor, and do to them and to others, as is just and right that they should do, and as they would have it to be done unto themselves; this is the good Work, and the good Life in the Judgement of God and Christ, and in the Intent of his Word and Gospel; and they who do indeed believe it to be so, will deny themselves, and forbear their Pleasures, and will Give and Distribute, and will Forbear and Forgive where it is needful for Faith and Duty's sake.

The way of Worship and the Doctrine of *Dissenters*, is not very pleasing to God, because it Teaches them to think, that Good and Righteous Duty to others (which is principal and best pleasing to him) to be but a consequent, secondary, and an inferiour Duty, and to be not so Needful and Good, as an humble, devout, believing, loving Heart and Affection towards him, is: From hence perhaps it is, that some Men have more Godliness, than they have Goodness; they help the Poor as their Neighbours do, and seem to be willing and ready for it, and make profession of the Duty, and save their Credit; but they save themselves also, for they are able to do more than most of their Neighbours do, and do not do it: They may now and then from some outward Respect and Aim, spare a little Help to a Friend or two, of their own Faith and Party; but they seldom help the Poor in a Christian and Righteous manner, or faithfully, heartily, privately, for Duty and Goodness sake: And although they do worship God Devoutly in the way which they think is according to his Word, and do dissent and separate from the established way of Worship, for his Sake, lest they should offend him; and

and although they have low Thoughts of themselves, and have no Hope but in his Mercy through Christ; yet it is not much to be expected that God should think well of them; because they have but little Heart and Mind for Good and Righteous Duty, which he commands, and sent Christ on purpose in a manner to perswade and convert People unto it.

Lastly, some Men do believe, that Love, and Mercy, and righteous Duty to others, is the Command and Mind of God, and is the Faith which Christ was sent to teach and to perswade, and to encourage with Life and Salvation: They have the good Property's and Duty's, which some Men make their particular Care and Work, and have Hope in God from them. *viz.* they are harmless, peaceable, courteous, and helpful to their Neighbours; they pay their Debts which are owing by Law and Justice, and which are owing by Equity and Reason; they are diligent in their Business; they are moderate in their Provision and use of Things for Life; they lay up for their Children, what may be spared from their own, and from the Poors Necessities; they know the need they have for the Blessing of God for their comfortable Subsistence, and of his Grace and Help for the good Discharge of their Duty, and of his Mercy to pardon and spare them; they have the Sense and Fear of him in them, and are humble, reverent, and devout towards him; they worship him in the way which the Law has commanded for the Peace and Unity of People, and for his Glory; but they know that it is the inward righteous Sense and Disposition of Heart, and not the outward Duty, that he looks especially into. They many times do faithfully and well in Duty to the Poor, but not always: Their Heart is not fully renewed to it; they have natural Desires, and will have them, whilst they are under the Necessities of Life; which incline, and some times prevail with them to favour themselves, and to omit the Duty, or to do less in it than they ought to do; and they are often Sorry for it afterwards, when they consider it, and do pray to God to Forgive them, and to strengthen the Sense of the Duty in them: They see plainly that they have great need that the Suffering and Righteousness of Christ

Christ should be accepted for them ; and that God for his Sake should pardon and save them : It is a greater Trouble to them to find and see that they are so much wanting and faulty in Duty to others, than it is to find and see that they have not a more affectionate Love to God and Christ. and a greater delight in Communion with him, and are not more free and ready for Duty's of Piety, and have not a stronger Hope and Trust in him, that they shall be with-held from falling into any great Iniquity and Sin, and shall be kept by his Power and Grace in Duty and in Peace with him : For if their Love, and Delight, and Hope in God was much greater than it is, yet it would not be accepted alone, and for its own Sake, or no further than it perswades them to be Good, and Merciful, and Righteous to the Poor and to others. Therefore it is their great Desire and Care to do faithfully and well in that Duty : It is the immediate present End, to which other Duty's are to be directed ; they are Means and Motives to it ; it is the Work and Duty, which before and above all Things else pleases God.

C H A P. XXI.

Love and Goodness to others, is the Work and Duty that does indeed Glorify God.

GOD is Almighty, and can do what he pleases without the help of second or inferior Causes and even against the course of Nature, and the common Series of Things : He is Omniscient, and knows all Things past, present, and to come ; he sees into the nature of Things, and discerns their Properties, and foresees their Effects before they are in being ; he knows what Use Men will make of their Liberty, and what they will freely and of themselves do, before they do it, or are resolved upon it, or do even think of it ; he is fully free and has no Impediment or Hindrance out of himself from what he is Minded to do ; he is Supreme
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and above all, and is Accountable to none, and is under no outward Law or Restraint. These Powers of God may be Reasons and Perswasions to Fear him, and to Serve him, and Obey him; but they are not for our Imitation: He does what he pleases, he is over all: But if a Man should take it upon him to do what he pleases, or should attempt to have others to be Servants to him, and to be under him; it would make him to be more like to the fallen *Angels*, than unto God.

A selfish proud aspiring Mind, is too common amongst natural People, and we are much exhorted and warned against it. *Mar. x. 43. 44. Whosoever will be Great among you, shall be your Minister, and whosoever of you will be the Chiefest, shall be servant of all Gal. v. 26. Let us not be desirous of vain Glory, provoking one another, envying one another. Phil. ii. 3. &c. Let nothing be done through Strife or vain Glory. but in lowliness of Mind let each esteem others better than themselves. Look not every Man on his own Things; but every Man also on the Things of others; let this Mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus., 1 Pet. v. 5, Be subject one to another, and be clothed with Humanity; for God resisteth the Proud, and giveth Grace to the Humble. 1 Cor. xv. 25. 26. Christ shall put down all Rule and all Authority and Power, for he must Reign till he hath put all Enemies under his Feet. They, who take it upon themselves to be over others, and to have their own Mind against them, are Enemies to Christ, they hate him, and say they will not have him to Reign over them; and how they will be dealt with, we may see in the Parable *Luk. xix. 27, The King will bid. bring them hither, and Slay them before me.**

Some Freedom, Knowledge, and Power, is given unto Men, and is proper to them, as they are Reasonable and not insensible and necessary Agents; thereby they are made capable of Instruction and Command, and are enabled to observe or reject it as they will: Those Endowments are indifferent, and are neither Good nor Evil in themselves; but they may help to make a Man, a Righteous and a Good Man, or an Unrighteous and a Bad Man, as he uses them to fulfil the Mind and Will of God, and for the Good of others, as he uses them to fulfil his own Mind and Will against

that Duty. The fallen *Angels* did much exceed Men in them; but when they used them for their own Pleasures, and had little regard to the Good of others, God regarded them not for their great Endowments, but cast them out of Heaven.

There is some Thing else in God, which is somewhat different from the abovesaid Perfections, which he accounts his great Excellency, and that is his gracious Mind and Temper, whereby he is inclined and pleased to Communicate of himself, and to give something of his Perfections to his Reasonable Creatures; he gives them Life, Knowledge, Power, and the Blessing of Life, that they may be Comfortable and Happy in themselves; he gives them also Discretion to Discern between moral Good and Evil; and a Mind and Sense to Perceive that they ought not to Live to their own Pleasure only, but to the Peace and Comfort and Benefit of others also; he gives them this Discretion and Sense, that they might become Righteous and Good People, and in some Degree like unto himself, having something of his Heart and Mind in them. This Mind and Temper in God, to give Grace and Blessing to his Reasonable Creatures, to make them Righteous and Happy, he accounts it as his greatest Excellency and highest Dignity; he is pleased with it in himself, and values it above his Supremacy and Power, and other Perfections; he esteems it as his Glory, as that which is indeed in itself, worthy of Esteem, and Praise, and Imitation from others; it is intended altogether for their Good, and not for any private or separate Good of his own or to himself; he has no need of the Best and the most Righteous of his Creatures, and therefore the Grace and Blessing which he gives them, is the more pure Goodness in him, and it is the greater Glory.

The Goodness of God is for our Imitation; he would have us to Learn from him, and to do as he does in it; he sets us his own Example to Teach and Persuade us to be Good and Helpful to others, freely for Goodness sake, without Selfish Gains or Aims, for he is so. By doing Good, we shew that we do Believe that he Duty is suitable to his Mind and is pleasing
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to him; and that he is Gracious and orders all Things for the Life and Comfort of People, and for the Improvement of the Sense of Love and Goodness to others in them; thereby we do something of the Work which he continually does, and which he Delights most in himself, and which he accounts to be his great Excellency; therefore by doing Good especially we Obey and Please him, we Honour and Glorify him. We do a little Honour him when we Pray to him, or Thank him, or Praise him with an humble, devout, and reverent Heart; for thereby we profess and shew, that he is able and also willing to Help us, or that he has freely done it; or that he is worthy of all Esteem and Reverence; and that we are as much below him in Grace and Goodness, as we are in natural Abilities; and we Honour him a little, when we forbear our own Ease and Pleasure, and are diligent in our Business, and moderate in our Enjoyments, and do restrain our own Desires and Passions, and do Deny ourselves in Obedience and Duty to him; for thereby we shew, that he is Righteous, Vertuous, Holy, and intirely free from all vain and selfish Delights, and that he would have us to be so. But we may not confine our Duty to these Things, and content ourselves with them: It is commanded and expected further, that we be Helpful and Good to others, and to do to them as we would be done unto. If God is somewhat Honoured by those Duty's, and others are not Benefited and Bettered by us, as they might and should be; then it will be accounted but a seeming and formal, and not a real and true Honour that we do unto him.

Christ bid, *Matth. v. 16. Let your Light so shine before Men, that they may see your good Works and Glorify your Father which is in Heaven.* He told his Disciples before, *Ver. 13. 14. That they were the Salt of the Earth and the Light of the World.* They were to be eminent Examples of Good and Righteous Duty to others, it was to be their great Work and Care they were to be Faithful and Constant in it; and God would indeed be Glorified by it; it would be seen and learned from them, that he does esteem and value the good Works that others are Bettered by, more than he does the Profession, and Worship, and other Duty, which common

Men Serve and Honour him with. Christ says indeed, *John. xv. 8. Herein is my Father Glorified, that ye bear much Fruit; so shall ye be my Disciples.* By Fruit he meant the Duty's that he Commanded and Taught: They are all Parts and Instances of Love and Goodness to others, or they are in order to it, and are Means and Helps to dispose and enable People for it; he seems to Comprehend them all in it. *Ver. 12. This is my Commandment, that ye Love one another as I have Loved you.* They are not for our own Desire and Satisfaction, but for the Benefit and Good of others; they do somewhat resemble us unto God, and are some Imitation of his Work and Goodness, and therefore they are a Glory and an Honour to him.

Christ himself Glorified him by the same way, by which he Taught and Exhorted his Disciples to do it; he was most highly Excellent in Goodness and Mercy; it was his daily and constant Work; his Mind was set upon it; he was free, willing, hearty, and effectual in it; he seldom did other then Miracles of Mercy, whereby others were Helped; he shewed it to all Persons with whom he had to do, in such a manner and measure as the Case needed and required, and was suitable and proper to them; he released and eased the Afflicted, he was loving to his Disciples and Friends, civil and courteous to Sinners, patient and gentle towards his Enemies; he continued in it against much Opposition; he was grieved to see that any who professed to be the People of God, should be hardened against it, more than he was grieved at the Injuries and Wrongs intended against himself. And having been thus eminent in Mercy and Goodness to others, he says in his Prayer to the Father, *John 17. iv I have Glorified thee on the Earth, I have finished the Work that thou gavest me to do.* Mercy and Goodness to others, was the Work that he was sent to do himself, and to command, and teach, and persuade his Disciples to do it, and it is the Work whereby the Father is truly glorified.

The Apostles confessed, *Matth. 16. xvi. Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.* The Goodness and Mercy that Christ shewed, they saw it to be the Goodness of God, and not of Man; and that God was worthy of all

all Praise and Honour for it; and consequently that works of Mercy and Goodness done to others, would be indeed to his Glory, since they would be an Imitation of him, and would be instances of that Goodness which indeed is, and which he esteems it to be his great Excellency.

John i. 14. We beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the only Begotten of the Father; full of Grace and Truth. They saw that Christ was very Loving, Merciful and Good; and in and from him, they saw and believed that the Father is so: Christ by his Example and Doctrine shewed it, and thereby Glorified him: And by Mercy and Goodness to others, we shall in some measure shew it, and shall Glorify him as he hath taught us to do. Some of the Jews; who had not a sense of good Duty to others in them; could see no more in Christ, than the Carpenters Son, (and perhaps scarce that) but thought him to be below or worse than a common Man, and to be a Sabbath-breaker, or a Blasphemer, or a Friend of Publicans and Sinners, or a Samaritan, or a Sorcerer that cast out Devils by Belzebub: But Wisdom is justified of all her Children. Luke vii. 35. The Disciples who had a sense of that Duty in them, did see that he was much more than Man; that he was the only Begotten of the Father, the beloved Son of God. The Infirmities and the Form of a Man, in which he appeared, and the Rejection of him by the great, and wise, and religious Jews; did not hinder; but they saw the Goodness and Glory of God in him.

The Apostle prayed for the *Philippians i. 11. That they might be filled with the Fruits of Righteousness which are by Jesus Christ unto the Glory and Praise of God. Or that they might do much, and do well in the Works and Duty's of Love, and Mercy, and Goodness to others, as Christ had taught and commanded; for this would be to the Peace, and Comfort, and Benefit of others; and therefore it would be to the Glory and Praise of God.*

He says, *Phil. ii. 9. &c. That God hath highly exalted Christ, and given him a Name which is above every Name; that at the Name of Jesus every Knee should bow, of Things in Heaven, and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth: And that every Tongue should Confess that Jesus Christ*

Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father. By that Bowing and Confession, the Apostle meant Submission and Obedience to Christ, an hearty Compliance to his Command, a Mind free and disposed for Love and Righteousness, which will secure and further the Good and Welfare of others. This Love and Righteousness God will have in his reasonable Creatures, even in all of them, in some Degree as they are capable of it: The Angels in Heaven who are near and about him, have very much of it in them, and are beloved of him for it, more than they are for their great and high Excellences: His People here on Earth have it in them, and do shew it to those with whom they have to do; they do desire to have it increased and to be made still more like unto Christ, and God loves them for it. Natural unregenerated People have the Means for it given them, which upon a due and diligent use might help to Convert them to it; for whilst they continue Unconverted, and are Sensual, Worldly, Selfish, or Unrighteous, God cannot approve of them, and be pleased with them. The evil *Angels* are destitute and void of Love and Goodness to others, and God has taken away his Blessing and Comfort from them; but if they could be renewed to it, and changed in their Mind and Temper, and become such as the good *Angels* are; there might be some hope that God would be Pacified towards them, and take them into his Favour. This Love and Righteousness, which God will have in all his reasonable Creatures, is not for the Pleasure of a few single Persons, but it is for the Benefit and Comfort of others, and for the Good and Welfare of the whole Society. It is a gracious Mind and Resolution in God to have it so, and he is worthy of all Esteem and Reverence for it. They then who do bow the Knee to Christ, and are Loving, and Righteous, and Good to others from his Command, they do indeed Reverence and Honour him, and are understood to do it to the Glory of God the Father.

The Apostle says, *Eph. i. 4. God hath Chosen us in Christ before the Foundation of the World, that we should be Holy, and without Blame before him in Love.* Or that we should be truly and heartily Loving, Righteous, and

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Good to others; it is and always was his Mind, that his People should be so; it is his Glory that he will have it so; it is, and it will be, as it is said, *Ver. 6. To the Praise of the Glory of his Grace.*

He bids, *1 Cor. x. 31. Whether ye Eat or Drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the Glory of God.* Or let your whole Carriage, and all your Doings with others, be to their Good: Forbear to have your own Desires, and to use your Liberty, when it may hurt or offend another; Be Just, be more than Just, be Equitable and Human: let it appear that you have more Concern for the Peace and Content of others, than you have for your own Pleasure: *Ver. 24. Let no Man seek his own, but every Man anothers Wealth.* And so you will be an Honour to God and to Christ, and will help to shew it, that those whom he hath, and would have for his People, are and must be good People indeed, who have as much Care for the Good of others, as they have for their own Good.

The first Christians were set at Liberty from the Law of the Jews, which did not please God; they were set against the Idolatry of the Heathen which did displease him: they were Converted to Good and Righteous Duty to others, which was pleasing and acceptable in his Sight; and so they were brought into Peace and Favour, and into a more near Relation to him; and it was for this End and with this Intent, that they might be Eminent and Excellent in that Duty, and might be a Glory to him: This seems to be signified and meant, *1 Pet. ii. 9. Ye are a chosen Generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar People;* (it is expected from you, and it is fit that ye should do it by a Carriage suitable to your Faith and Hope) *that ye should shew forth the Praises of him, who hath called you out of Darkness into his marvellous Light.* They were exhorted, *Ver. 12. Have your conversation Honest, (or Right and Good, Fair and Commendable) among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak against you as Evil doers, they may by your good Works which they shall behold, Glorify God in the day of Visitation.* and again, *1 Pet. iv. 10. 11. As every Man hath received the Gift, even so Minister the same one to another, as good Stewards of the manifold Grace of God, &c. that God in all Things may be Glorified through Jesus Christ.*

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Thus we are taught and bid to Glorify God, it is to be done by the Good and Righteous Duty which he commands; the Obeying him, and the Glorifying him, seems to be the same Thing in the work of it, though they differ in some respect; if he is Obeyed, he is Glorified, and if he is Glorified, he is Obeyed; if the one of these is not done, the other also is not done; the one seems to respect his Will, as he has an absolute Power over us; the other seems to respect his gracious Mind, as he intends the Good of People. By doing the Thing that he commands, we shew our Dependance upon him, and Subjection to him, and thereby we Obey him; we shew also that the Thing is Righteous, and that he intends it for the Good of others. and for the Peace and Welfare of the Society (for so it is in the Tendency and Effect of it) and not for his own Pleasure only, and thereby we Glorify him. but if it be not done though we serve him much otherways, we shall be looked upon not to Glorify him, and not to Obey him. *Matth. xv. 8. This People Honoureth me with their Lips, but their Hearts is far from me.* The Jews had but little Heart for good Duty to others; and their other Services to God, were but of little Esteem and Value with him, and but little Honour to him. It is said both of Jews and Gentiles, *Rom. iii. 23. That they all have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God.* Besides their actual Sins, they were wanting and faulty in Duty to others, and did not truly Glorify him, and shew and set forth his Goodness by it as they should have done.

Some Persons seem to have another way of Glorifying God: they hope to do it by a low debaseing Belief of themselves; they know (and they do desire to be sensible of it) that their Mind and Heart and all the Principles of Action in them are naturally Evil, and are much inclined to Sin and Vanity, and are much delighted in it, and are backward to the Holy Services of God; they know that their Renovation is imperfect, their Graces are very Weak. their Duties are mixed with much Sin, and are unconstant, and have scarce ever done as God commands; they know that the best which they have in them, is displeasing to him, for he is perfectly Holy, and cannot be pleased with any Thing that

that is not so. Therefore it is intirely and wholly his Pity and Mercy for Christ's sake to spare them, since of themselves they do deserve to have his Indignation shewed upon them, and to perish under extreme Punishment and Misery. The more unworthy they are of it, the greater is his Mercy to spare them; and the more low and humble Thoughts they have of themselves, the more they exalt and magnify it. And this they think they are taught to do, *Luke 7. 47. To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.* *1 Cor 1. 29. No Flesh should Glory in his Presence.* *Psal. 3. 9 St. Paul* if-ow'd his own Righteousness and would not be found before God in it. *Rom. 4. 2 Abraham* was not justified by Works. *Luke 18. 11. &c.* the Pharisee commended himself, and God the rather condemned him; the Publican condemned himself, and God the rather justified him. *Ver. 14. For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*

In Answer to these things, it may be considered, that the Way which those Persons take to glorify God, was not the Way whereby Christ glorified him; and he, and the Apostles bid People to do it. An humble sorrowful Belief and Sense of themselves before God, and Rightness to others, are different Duties; they may be done, when the other is not done; the former is of little Esteem with him, without the latter. They may believe and think that they are holy and well pleasing to him in themselves, and may humbly thank and praise him for his undeserved Mercy towards them, and yet not do to others as they should do, and not have a Mind and Heart disposed to do it; if it be so, then they are not such Persons as God likes well of; they do not serve and obey and glorify him duly and in a right manner; and it may be feared, that their Faith and Hope will fail them at last.

The above cited Texts may be thus explained. *Luke 7. 47. To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.* Or he, who thinks he has diligently kept the Law, and done the Will of God, he hopes he has not much Iniquity to be forgiven, or much need to do other Duty, that God may be better pleased with him; he

will scarcely be persuaded to deny himself, to forbear his Desires, and to forego his Profit for the Help of others; he will love but little; for he thinks and hopes his Peace is made with God other-ways. So it was with the Jew that entertained Christ; he made no doubt he had done his Duty to others, and had no need to be taught it by Christ; whom also he looked upon to be no Prophet: It was not likely, that he should love much, and become a good Man. But the Woman that washed his Feet with her Tears, and wiped them with the Hairs of her Head (*Ver. 38.*) knew that she had sinned, and had not done her Duty to others, and had offended God; she was heartily penitent for it, and was willing to cease from Sin, and to be helpful to others, that she might have Peace and Life with God, as Christ was wonted to teach; it might reasonably be expected, that she would love much; or that from the Esteem and Hope she had of the Goodness and Mercy of God, she would become a very sober, and a very good Person.

1 Cor. I. 29, &c. That no Flesh should Glory in his Presence. The Apostle spoke of the Quality of the Persons whom God had for his People; for the most were not the high, but the mean and low People of the World; that no Man should value himself, and think he is in Favour with God; because he has more Knowledge and Judgment, or more Authority and Power, or more Means and a better Estate than ordinary; and is a Master, and is full and great above common People. These Advantages might help Men to do some good; but it is but little Good too many do, in Comparison of the Pleasure, which they have to themselves from them; and God thinks the worse of them for it. Therefore let no Man from such Advantages and outward Blessings boast in his Presence. *Ver. 31. He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord.* Or let him excel in Righteous and Goodness, and use the Blessings that are given him to the good of others; this will be pleasing and honourable to God, this will make him glorious, and approved and thought well of before the Lord.

Phil.

Phil. 3. 9. St. Paul disowned his own Righteousness. At the first before he was converted, his great Care was to keep the Law; and he was blameless in it, and expected Favour with God from it; he called it his own Righteousness: But afterwards being converted, he understood, that it was of no value; and that it was good and righteous Duty to others, that God required and was pleased with; and now his great Care was to approve himself to God in that Duty; he called it the Faith of Christ, and the Righteousness of God, and did desire, *Phil. 3. 9.* to be found in Christ not having his own Righteousness, which is of the Law, but which is through the Faith of Christ, the Righteousness which is of God by Faith.

Rom. 4. 2. If Abraham were justified by Works he hath whereof to glory, but not before God. Or if he had done the Work, and kept the Rites and Ordinances of the Law (which were afterwards commanded by Moses, and which now the Jews were very earnest for) and if he had kept and observed them in Respect and Duty to God, hoping for Favour with him for it; then perhaps Men might have thought him to have been a more religious and holy Man than ordinary; but God would not have thought him to have been a better Man for it, than some others were. God is of another Mind than to be pleased with such Services. But *Ve. 3.* Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for Righteousness. He believed that good Duty to others was the Mind of God, and was pleasing in his Sight; and he was faithful and hearty in it, and God was well pleased with him for it, and accounted him to be a righteous and a good Man.

Luke 18. 11, &c. the Pharisee commended himself, and God the rather condemned him, &c. but God did not condemn him, because he commended himself, but because he had little or nothing of the good Man in him; the best that can be said of him is this, viz. that he was not a very bad Man; he had not done any great Wickedness: But it cannot be said of him that he was a good Man, or that the Poor were any thing the better for him. Therefore it could not be expected, that God should think well of him, and justify him. If the

Publican had done wicked Things, he was deeply humbled and sorry for it : His Repentance did not make him Innocent, but it made him to be at that present not a very bad Man, or not much worse than the Pharisee was ; there was more Hope, that the Publican would become a good Man, and would do to others as God desired, than there was that the Pharisee would ; and therefore he was rather justified.

Lutke xviii. 14 Every one that exalteth himself shall be abased ; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

A Man exalts himself, when he thinks some Work or Duty to be principally commanded, and to be best pleasing to God, which is not so ; and accordingly is diligent in it about other Duties, and has hope in God upon it, and thinks it makes him a better Man, and to be more in Favour with him, than others are ; when he is mistaken, for his Work does not make him to be so ; the Duty which should do it, and which is indeed best pleasing to God, is not duly done ; such a Man may be said to exalt himself. So the Pharisee forbore known open Sins, and fasted and was legally just, and thereupon he thought himself to be an holy and a good Man, and to be much in Favour with God ; but he did not do the Good to others, that he should have done ; and therefore he did not please God ; he was far from being an holy and a good Man in the Sight and Judgment of God. As to the other Part of the Text, *viz. He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.* For a Man to humble himself, is to submit himself to God ; it is to make the Command and Will of God his Work and Duty, and to be diligent and faithful in it, and to take Care to do it truly and sincerely well, as much to the Mind of God as he can ; or somewhat more particularly, it is to be conscientiously innocent, just, true, peaceable, forgiving, merciful, loving, helpful to the Poor ; it is to do to them, and to all others, as he would be done unto ; for this is the Command and Will of God ; it is the Sense and Intent of the whole Scripture ; it is the Duty which Christ came to perswade People unto ; and heartily to believe it to be so, is to believe in him. Such a Man's Faith and Hope reaches and obliges him to humble himself,

to restrain his own Desires, to forbear his Pleasures and Designs, to spare from himself, to be helpful to the Poor, to be patient of Offences and Wrongs, to forgive Debts, to chuse rather to lose and suffer himself, than to be strict and hard, and unmerciful to any one ; all which as there is Need and Occasion for it, he does for Duty and Righteousness Sake, in Obedience to God, and to be accepted with him. This is against his natural Heart and Inclination ; it is Self-Denial to him ; he submits and humbles himself to God in it : It is also against the Way of common Men ; he may seem to them to be a Fool for Christ's Sake. But from thus humbling himself, he will be highly exalted and rewarded.

We may see and learn from those Texts, that it is by good and righteous Duty to others, and not by high Thoughts of him, that God is glorified. He is not vain-glorious like a weak Man ; he does not think the better of himself, for that People confess before him, that they are unworthy of his Mercy, and do give the whole Praise of it to him. But he is gracious, he is pleased to see, that Love and Mercy, and righteous and good Duty is observed and kept up ; and that People are sincere and hearty in it, and do deny themselves, and forbear their own Satisfaction for the Welfare and Good of others. The Poor are his People, as well as the Rich and all Men are ; he has made them, and has given them some Sense of righteous Duty, and some Mind for it ; he has more Concern for them, than he has for greater Persons ; he would have them to be relieved and supplied. Some Persons are free and liberal in feasting or requiring their Friends, who have little Need to be feasted ; and they think that they have much good Nature in them ; but they are hard and sparing in giving to the Poor, who have great Need to be relieved ; and God sees that they have but little of his Love and Nature in them. He desires the Peace of the Society, and the Welfare of every one of it, and that for Goodness Sake, and for their Comfort. It is Love and Mercy, and righteous Duty, or the doing to others, as People would be done unto, that continues and furthers that Peace and Welfare

fare more than any other Duty does ; it is to the gracious Benefit of him, who does the righteous Duty ; and it is to the Comfort and Benefit of him to whom it is done. It is better pleasing to God, to see that People have his Mind and Temper in them, and are free and hearty in good Duty to others, than it is to see, that himself is served and worshipped ; and that they are Religious and Devout towards him ; and that they thank and praise him for his Mercy and Blessing to themselves particularly. By that Duty especially, we do obey and please him, and do shew his gracious Mind and Goodness, and do glorify him.

C H A P. XXII.

*Love and Goodness to others is the principal Part
and Property of Righteousness.*

XIX. **R**ighteousness is a great Term or Word. It seems to comprehend and signify something more than, or something different from, what Holiness, or the Love of God, or the Fear of him, or Hope in him, does ; at least as they are sometimes understood : The Promise of Life is made to those Graces ; but they will not be accepted to it, without Righteousness, or without an Heart and Mind for Love and Mercy, and Goodness to others. It seems to relate principally unto Men, and to intend a good and an unblameable Conversation and Carriage with them ; it is more than what the Law of Man commonly commands ; but it is not more than what the Law of God constantly requires ; it is more than bare Innocency and Justice, but it is not more than the doing to others, as we would be done unto. The righteous Man in all Cases does the Thing which is right and good, freely and heartily, in Obedience to God ; he does not make the Law, or the Example of his Neighbours, but Equity and Humanity, and the doing as he would be done unto,

to, the Rule and Measure of his Duty. He believes and is sensible of it, that God is holy and just, that his Mind is settled and unchangeable, and cannot be turned from the Love and Mercy, and Righteousness, which is his Temper, and which he commands; that he does not regard the Profession or the Quality of Men; be they religious, or confident, or humble more than is ordinary; be they Masters or Inferiours; be they Teachers or Hearers; they may be such, and yet be no better to others, than common People are; he thinks well of no Man any further than he is in his Heart and Life such a Man as he commands him to be; he is no respecter of Persons. Therefore the righteous Man dares not to allow himself in the Omission of his Duty to others; for he finds, notwithstanding his Care of it, that through one Thing or another, it is too often and too much omitted; and that he has great Need of Mercy: It is his Desire in his praying, and in other Duties of Piety, that he may be strengthened and excited to it, and made more constant and effectual in it. Probably some Persons may be diligent in Duty towards God, but not so careful of Duty that ought to be done to others, as he is. Or they may confess, that they are Sinners in the general, and may desire and pray that God would pardon them, and yet not consider it and confess, that it may be, it is their Unrighteousness, and want of good Duty to others, that chiefly makes them to be Sinners, and not well pleasing in his Sight, as he does. Or they may have more Hope and Comfort from the trusting upon the Mercy of God and Christ, than he has; but his Hope from the Care of good Duty to others, is better grounded, and will be better accepted at last. Or they may desire and pray heartily that God would keep them from Afflictions and Troubles, and would continue Health and Peace to them; and they shall be thankful for it, as for a Blessing and Mercy, which they do not deserve; but they desire it for themselves, and for their own Comfort; they think but little of helping the Poor; but his Desire is that God would give him Grace to help them, as well as that he would defend him from Troubles, and keep him in Peace and Safety.

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The Word of God teaches, that good Duty to others is Righteousness or the great Part and Property of it, and somewhat frequently it sets out and describes the righteous Man by his Course and Doings, which are to the Benefit and Comfort of others; it suggests and intimates to us, that it is not a Duty, which he does now and then only in great and unusual Cases; but that it is his constant Duty, it is the Work upon which his Mind and Care is set, and in which he endeavours and hopes to approve himself to God. Moses bids, Deut. xxiv. 13. *In any case thou shalt deliver to thy poor Brother the Pledge again, when the Sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his own Raiment, and bless thee; and it shall be Righteousness unto thee before the Lord thy God.* Job did relieve and help, and rescue the Poor and Oppressed; he calls it Righteousness; it was his Comfort; he accounted it his Glory. Job xxix. 12, &c. *I delivered the Poor that cried, and the Fatherless, and him that had none to help him, the Blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the Widow's Heart to sing for Joy; I was Eyes to the Blind, and was feet to the lame; I was a Father to the Poor, and the Cause which I knew not I searched out. (and Ver. 14.) I put on Righteousness, and it clothed me; my Judgment was as a Robe and a Diadem.* Psal. xxxvii. 21, 26. *The Wicked borroweth and payeth not again; but the Righteous soweth Mercy and giveth; he is ever Merciful, and lendeth, and his Seed is blessed.* Psal. cxii. 9. *He hath dispersed, he hath given to the Poor, his Righteousness endureth for ever; his Horn shall be exalted with Honour.* Prov. xxi. 26. *The Righteous giveth and spareth not.* Prov. xxvii. 7. *The Righteous considereth the Cause of the Poor; but the Wicked regardeth not to know it.* St. Peter exhorts, 1 Pet. iii. 8, &c. *Be ye all of one Mind, having Compassion one of another, Love as Brethren, be Pitiful, be Courteous, not vendring Evil for Evil, or Railing for Railing; but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing; for he that will love Life, and see good Days, let him refrain his Tongue from Evil, and his Lips that they speak no Guile; let him eschew Evil and do Good, let him seek Peace and ensue it.* And Ver. 12. he adds, from Psal. xxxiv. *For the Eyes of the Lord are*

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over the Righteous (or over such good and merciful Persons, as he before exhorted them to be) and his Ears are open unto their Prayers; but the Face of the Lord is against them that do Evil. Matth. xxv. 34. &c. Christ declares those good People to be Blessed, who have relieved the Poor, fed the Hungrey, cloathed the Naked, visited the Sick; at Ver. 37. they are called the Righteous, then shall the Righteous answer, &c. at Ver. 41. he calls them cursed who have not relieved as they should have done, and he says, at Ver. 46. *These shall go away into everlasting Punishment, but the Righteous into Life eternal.* Since good Duty to others is the principal Property of Righteousness, from hence we may perceive and believe, that it was that Duty, that Christ intended when he affirmed positively, Matth. v. 20. *I say unto you, that except your Righteousness (your good Duty to others) shall exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no Case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven:* And that he intended that Duty when he bid and promised, Matth. vi. 33. *Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness (or let your Care be, not to please your selves, and to have your own Mind, but to be merciful and good, for God is so) Meat and Cloathing, and the good Things of Life shall then be added unto you;* and that St. Peter intended that Duty when he said, Acts x. 34, 35. *God is no respecter of Persons, but in every Nation he that feareth him, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted with him;* and that St. Paul likewise intended it when he said Rom. x. 10. *With the Heart Man believeth unto Righteousness.* The Counsel then, which the Prophet Daniel gave to the Babylonian Monarch, we may take to our selves, and may understand it, as an Exhortation given to us, to be merciful and righteous to the Poor, and to others, and so we may hope we shall have the Mercy and Blessing of God. Dan iv. 27. *Wherefore, O King, let my Counsel be acceptable unto thee; and break off thy Sins by Righteousness, and thine Iniquities by shewing Mercy to the Poor; if it may be a lengthning of thy Tranquillity.*

C H A P. XXIII.

Love and Goodness to others, is the Work and Duty, especially by which we shall be judged at the last Day.

XX. **T**HE Judgment at the last Day is often foretold in the Gospel, and it is almost as often foretold, that it will be upon the Works of People, which have been, or which should have been, the Duties commanded. *Matth. xvi. 27. The Son of Man shall come in the Glory of his Father, with his Angels, and then he shall reward every Man according to his Works. Rom. ii. 6. God will render to every Man according to his Deeds. 2 Cor. v. 10. We must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the Things done in his Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. 1 Pet. i. 17. Without respect of Persons God judge h according to every Man's Work. Revel. ii. 23. I am he which searcheth the Reins and Hearts, and I will give unto every one of you according to your Works. Revel. xx. 12, 13. The Dead, small and great, were judged according to their Works; and the Sea gave up the Dead, and Death and Hell delivered up the Dead which were in them; and they were judged every Man according to their Works. Revel. xxii. 12. Behold, I come quickly, and my Reward is with me, to give every Man according as his Work shall be.* The Works upon which People will be judged, are the Works and Duties, which they are now commanded to do; they are the Works of Equity and Humanity, and Love and Mercy; they are the good and righteous Works which People would have done unto themselves. God sent his Son to persuade and convert People unto them; it is his Goodness and his Glory to command them; they are for the Peace and Welfare of the Society; they are for the Good of others; they help to make People good People, somewhat like unto him; therefore he will have them observed and done. He has given People warning of it, that there shall be

be an Account taken of them, and they shall be examined whether they have been true and faithful, or have not been so; and that the eternal Condition of People shall be happy or miserable, as their Works now shall be found to have been answerable to the Command and Mind of God, or not. Some Persons are blessed with Plenty, Peace and Prosperity; God seems at present to have a Favour for them above many others; but it is no good Proof of it; it is a more certain Proof and Sign, that he expects the more good and righteous Duty from them, and will judge them by their use of the Means they had for it; if they misuse the Means, and apply his Blessings to their own Desires, and do omit the Duty, or do but little in it, he will shew his Displeasure against them and condemn them for it. *Luke vi. 24, 25. Wo unto you that are Rich, for ye have received your Consolation; Wo unto you that are full, for ye shall hunger; Wo unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep.* Or however he is pleased to deal with us, if he makes us to bear Troubles, Affliction, Poverty, yet it is his Command, that we should be Harmless, Just, Righteous, and should do to others as we would be done unto; and he has told us and warned us of it, that we shall be judged by that Duty. If we have the Belief and Sense of it in us, we shall be as willing to do what we can in it, as some People are to call upon him in their Need; and he will have more Respect and Regard to us than he has to them; that little which we shall then faithfully do in it, will shew, that we do believe the Truth, and are converted to it, and have some Knowledge of God and of his Mind in us; and are more desirous to obey and please him, than we are to have our selfish natural Desires; it will shew, that we would do much more in it, if we could, and were enabled for it; and that we obey the Law, and do the Duty, by which we shall be judged; and it may be hoped, that he will graciously acquit and justify us. *2 Cor. viii. 12. If there be first a willing Mind, it is accepted according to that a Man hath, and not according to that he hath not. Luke xvi. 10. He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also*

in much ; and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much

God is said to be the righteous Judge ; he will judge People by the Works which they have done, or which they have not done ; which it is just and right, equitable and human, fit and reasonable, that they should do. 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith ; henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that Day ; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.* Or to all them, who do gladly and heartily embrace the Faith of Christ, and do esteem it as a great Mercy, that he has revealed the Mind of God, and shewed the Work and Duty, whereby they shall have Peace and Life with him. It is said, Hebr. vi. 10. *God is not unrighteous to forget your Work and Labour of Love, which ye have shewed toward his Name, in that ye have ministered to the Saints, and do minister.* He is righteous, he is gracious and good, and therefore it is suitable to his Nature, and proper to him, to spare and forgive, and save those good People, who do minister to the Saints, who do relieve the Poor, and do that which is right and good ; he is not unrighteous, he will be sure to do it. It is said, Acts xvii. 31. *He hath appointed a Day, in the which he will judge the World in Righteousness (which People shew and do to others) whereof he hath given Assurance unto all Men, in that he raised Christ from the Dead ; who commanded that Duty in his Name, and declared the Judgment that would be upon it.* It is said, Rom. ii. 6, &c. *God will render to every Man according to his Deeds ; to them who patiently continue in well-doing, eternal Life ; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the Truth, but obey Unrighteousness, Indignation, and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish upon every Soul of Man that doeth Evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile ; but Glory, Honour, and Peace to every Man that worketh Good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile ; for there is no respect of Persons with God.* Christ speaks of the Resurrection, and says, John v. 28, 29. *The Hour is coming, in the which all that are in the Graves shall hear his Voice, and shall come forth, they that have done Good,*
unto

unto the Resurrection of Life ; and they that have done Evil, unto the Resurrection of Damnation. Here he mentions two Kinds of People, them who have done Good, and them who have done Evil ; he makes no mention of a third Kind of People different from them two ; who have neither done Good, nor have done Evil, at least actually : Therefore by them who have done Evil, we are to understand, not only those Persons who have actually done wicked mischievous Things ; but those Persons also, who have not done the Good, which was commanded and required ; for by not doing it, they disobey God ; they make or occasion others to suffer, by not doing to them as they should do ; they really, and in the Effect of Things, do do Evil ; and accordingly they will be looked upon and judged to have been Evil doers, and will be condemned for it. This Christ plainly teaches, *Matth. xxv. 41, &c.* He will say to them on the Left Hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels ; for I was an Hungred, and ye gave me no Meat ; I was Thirsty, and ye gave me no Drink ; I was a Stranger, and ye took me not in ; Naked, and ye Cloathed me not ; Sick, and in Prison, and ye visited me not. *Ver. 45.* In as much as ye did it not to one of the least of these (my Brethren) ye did it not to me. They will be condemned, for not doing the Good to the Poor, and to others, which they might and should have done, though they have not much gross actual Wickedness to be condemn'd for. *Ver. 46.* And these shall go away into everlasting Punishment, but the Righteous into Life eternal. And thus he says it will be, *John xii. 48.* The Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge Men at the last Day.

If People might be allowed at the last Judgment to speak for themselves, and to say what they could in their own Defence, that they might not be condemned ; it may be, that some Persons would plead and say, that they lived a godly Life, and were attentive and devout in the Worship of God, and observed the Ordinances and Duties of Religion, and kept the Lord's Day holy, and shewed that they had a Reverence for God, and did hope and trust in him for his Mercy and Blessing ; and that they did him some Service by their
Example,

Example, and did remember and mind some loose Persons of their Ungodliness, in that they did too much overlook and neglect the Worship and Honour, which they ought to have rendred and paid unto him. To this it might be answered, that so far they did well; it was a Duty they owed to God; and it might have helped to have made them good People; but they rested upon it, as if it had been enough to have been Holy and Religious; they did not do the Good, and help the Poor and Afflicted, as they should have done, and as God commanded and desired before and beyond Respect and Addressees to himself. And because that great Duty was not done with any good Mind and Heart, therefore God has no good Mind and Mercy for them.

Or it may be, that some Persons might plead and say, that they did not live in Ease and Liberty, a Charge and a Trouble to those about them, as some did; but that they were diligent and industrious in their Business and Employment, and did their Work truly and well, to the Use and Profit of their Masters; and therefore they might deserve what they earned, and have it and use it as their own. Since they did justly and laboriously earn it: They were not forgetful of God, but did own it as his Goodness, and were thankful to him for it; for that he was pleased to give them Strength and Skill, and Patience for their Work, and to make it profitable to them. To this it might be answered, that they had a little to spare for the Relief and Comfort of the Distressed and Needy, but they kept it to themselves, and did not so spare it; and it shewed, that they had more Mind to please themselves, and to have their own Profit, than they had to please God, and to do his Command and Will, or than they had to Mercy and Goodness to others. And the same selfish Heart, that inclined them to keep to themselves that little which they had to spare, would have inclined them to do so, if they had had ten times more to spare and give. *Luke xvi. 19 He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much.* Therefore

fore God has no more Pity for them, than they had for others.

Or it may be, that some Persons might then plead and say, that they did not spend that which they had upon Feasting and Entertainments, and fruitless Visits, and Pleasures, and Vanity; they did not make Provision for the Flesh to fulfil the Lusts thereof; they did not spend their Means upon excessive Eating and Drinking; but they restrained their Appetite and natural Desires, and lived soberly and temperately, in greater Self Denial and Moderation, than many others did, who had wherewith to indulge themselves. To this it might be answered, that Self-Denial and Moderation was not all the Duty that God required; it did not please him of itself alone; if they did not spend what they had upon their sensual Lusts and Desires, yet they kept it to themselves, and did no body any good with it; they did not Feed the Hungred, nor Cloath the Naked, nor supply the Wants of the Poor; they did not do to them, as God commanded and desired; and therefore he does not like well of them.

Or it may be, that some Persons might then plead and say, that they had some Love and Mercy, and did some Good; for they employed Servants and Labourers in their Business, and paid them for their Work; whereby they subsisted for the Time; they paid their Allotments in the Overseers Rate, and thereby contributed to the Maintenance of the Poor; they gave some Relief to indigent Persons at the Door, and once in the Year they gave larger Gifts amongst their poor Neighbours. To these Things it might be answered, that it was their own Business and Profit, and not the Subsistence of Servants and Labourers, that they cared much for; they would not have employed them, but for their own Advantage: As to the Overseers Rate, the Law and the Magistrate would have made them to have paid to it; and they did it, not because they cared much for the Poor, but for their own Peace and Safety, which they procured by it; they would not have contributed to their Maintenance if they could well have avoided it; for there were many other Persons near and about them, who
had

had great need of Help, but had none or but little from them : As to their Free Gifts, they were but small, and but a little Part of that which they reserv'd to themselves ; perhaps they were not so much, as the Crumbs were, which fell from the rich Man's Table, wherewith Lazarus did desire to be fed, *Luke xvi. 21.* If their Gifts, and their Gains to themselves, were compared with his Crumbs, and his Expences upon himself ; it would be found, that his Crumbs were as much, or more than their Gifts ; and that their Gains were as much, or more than his Expences ; and that they had no more Goodness in them than he had ; therefore God thinks and likes of them, no better than he did of that Gentleman.

Or it may be, that some Persons might then plead and say, that if they did save, it was not from Covetousness, or from a Desire to purchase or increase their Means, or from a Delight in Wealth and Plenty, and the Pleasures of it ; but it was to provide for the comfortable Subsistence of their Children, who had none else to care and provide for them ; they would have been inhuman and unnatural, and worse than Infidels, if they had not saved and provided what they could for them ; they did but that which was fit and just, and dutiful ; therefore they hope they may be spared, and not condemned. To this it might be answered, that if it was their Duty, it was not their whole Duty ; their Means and Substance were not given them for that Intent and Purpose only ; their Children were their second Selves, and to save for them, was almost the same Thing as to save for themselves. Many of the poor People lay under much Hardship, and with much Patience did maintain their Integrity, and keep themselves innocent and just, and were pitiful and loving, and would have helped the Needy and Distressed, if they had had wherewith to have done it : They were better People, and were more the Children of God, and had more of his Nature and Temper in them, and were better beloved of him, than such Parents and their Children were : Many such poor People were presented and offered to their Sight, and set before them, that they might shew Pity

Pity and Mercy to them, and might relieve and help them ; for they had real need of it, and God commanded it and did desire it ; but their Mind and Care was to save and provide for the needless Conveniences, the Ease and Liberty, the Luxury, the Pleasure, the Vanities of their Children ; they spared but little to ease and help their distressed and afflicted Neighbours in their Necessities ; they had but little regard to the Mind of God towards them. And now God does not think well of them ; he has no Kindness for them.

At the last Judgment People will be condemned for selfish unrighteous Works and Doings, if there should be none other great and grievous Wickedness to be charged upon them : The not doing the Thing that is right and good, to the Poor and to others, will be more to their Condemnation, than any thing they shall be able to say for themselves (suppose they should be allowed to speak and plead to it) will not be, to their Justification.

There is not another Grace or Duty, which has so many high Things that might be spoken about it ; which has so much that might be said for the Proof of it ; which is so well pleasing in the Sight of God, which is so necessary for us to have, as Love and Mercy, and Goodness to others is. The Kingdom of Heaven, the Mind and Temper of God, and of Christ, and of the Angels, the Faith of *Abraham*, the Law of *Moses*, the Mind and Message of the Prophets, the Commands and Doctrines of the Gospel, the Ordinances of Religion, the last Judgment, may teach us that it is good and great, and necessary above any, and even above all Things else in Religion. It is probable that much People, and especially many rich Men of Means or Wealth do not think it to be so, and therefore do not do the Good which they ought to do. Their Practice is not a safe Rule for us to go by ; our Truth and Faithfulness will not be judged of by it ; it will not excuse our Iniquity, to say that we did it much, or more, for our Parts, in it than some greater Men did : It is the Command and Mind of God, and not the Example of such Men, that we are to observe and follow ; we must answer to him for what we do in

it, and be rewarded, as it shall be found to have been. It is probable that most People spend what they have to spare from their Necessities, upon their Pleasures and Enjoyments; and think they are no more than are needful, and that it would be hard to them, to be with-held from them; or they keep it to themselves, that they and theirs, and none others, may be the better for it; as if it was given them for their own Use only; they have not the Heart to do the Good, which they are enabled for, and might do, and which is commanded; few of the poor People about them, have any, or but little help from them: And yet they doubt not but God is at Peace with them, and will uphold and preserve their good and full Condition to them, whilst they live, and will save them when they die, and will continue their Means and Substance to their Children after them. But there is much Cause to fear, that sooner or later he will withdraw his Blessing and Mercy and will shew his Displeasure upon them or their Children, or upon both, for their selfish Iniquity and Unrighteousness. It cannot be, that he should be pleased with them, who do not do the Thing that is pleasing to him; but do the contrary, and do use and apply his Blessings to their own Delights and Designs against his Command.

But let not us be of the same Mind and Way with such People, lest it be with us as it may be feared it will be with them, and our End be the same with theirs. Let us believe it to be a very near and certain Truth, that it is the Mind of God, that we should be loving and merciful, and righteous to others, and should do to them as we would be done unto; let us remember the Duty, and think often upon it, and endeavour to understand it further; and to know ourselves, and our Faults and Neglects in it better than we do; let us consider Things before spoken of, and especially the Commands, Exhortations, Doctrines, Promises, Threatnings, and other Declarations in the Gospel: They are all intended for our Instruction in the Duty, and to be Perswasions and Motives to it; let us pray heartily to God, that his Spirit may en-
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liven, strengthen, and increase the Belief and Sense of it in us, and may dispose and excite us to be faithful, effectual and constant in it. And then it may be hoped, that God will own us for his People, and even for his proper Children, who have something of his Mind and Nature in us; and that he will spare and forgive us, defend and keep us, and bless our succeeding Labours, and provide for us, and continue to us the Comforts and Enjoyments which he gives us; and that he will be pleased at length for Christ's Sake, to number us amongst his blessed Saints above, to our eternal Peace and Welfare.

F I N I S.





